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IMPLICATIONS FOR CHURCH RENEWAL
"OF PAUL TILLICH'S THEOLOGY OF CULTURE

A Dissertation

Presented to
The Faculty of the School
of Theology at Claremont

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Religion

by
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM, PURPOSE, AND FORMAT

I. THE PROBLEM

There exists today a considerable degree of uneasiness among leaders and members of the Protestant church. The church bears a radically different relation to the world around it from that which it has traditionally born, and, with increasing rapidity of change becoming the norm, the future of the church becomes increasingly uncertain. Faced with changes in the past with which it was not prepared to cope, the church has retreated in the face of modern science.

It was a retreat, a retirement along the whole line, which, to be sure, saved religion from utter destruction but reduced it by and large to a mere side issue.¹

The church in the present day is facing a similar problem in the face of modern culture. This problem, as recognized and dealt with in the present study, is threefold. In the first place there is the inherent obligation of the church, as the bearer of the Gospel, to permeate the totality of culture with religious values to at least the extent that some have associated with periods in the past, even though the forms of that penetration may now be much different. The fact that the dating of historical time in the western nations derives from the advent of Christ is symbolic of the uniqueness of the Christian Gospel and of its value to men. One aspect of the Christian way that can

¹Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), p. 45.

bear notice is its quality of community. Tillich notes that, "A state of ultimate concern is actual only in a community of action."² The community of the faithful must itself be strengthened, in order to be relevant to the world of the twentieth century.

In the second place a need exists to re-evaluate the life of the church as it conceives of itself as the bearer of the eternal Gospel in a changing world. As retooling and restructuring are regarded as necessary procedures in the industrial and commercial world in order that the product may be more efficiently produced and distributed, so in the church it is necessary to have perspective, that the proper relation between means and ends may be maintained. This is illustrated by statements such as the following: "The unconditional claim made by Christianity is not related to the Christian church, but to the event upon which the church is based."³ This means that the church is not the destination of God's intent, but the instrument of God's intent. Instruments are sharpened, modified and redesigned as the needs require, suggesting that the church, as an instrument, should be aware of the need for reform and renewal.

In the third place the problem becomes one of finding ways and means for the renewal of the church. Ways and means may be general or specific, abstract or concrete, immediate or long range. They may take many shapes and forms as they mediate the Gospel to man in his world.

²Paul Tillich, The Dynamics of Faith, (New York: Harper & Bros., 1957), p. 117.

³Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 41.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to grapple with this problem from within the "theological circle", to use a phrase of Tillich's, that is, with subjective judgments of its crucial importance, and at the same time with as much detachment and objectivity as possible.

The problem will be considered as having a direct relationship to the Protestant churches in the western capitalist democracies, with the hope of discovering some guidelines that will aid in the renewal of the spirit and the life of the church. This is not to say that the Protestant churches are to be considered as the sole mediators of the Gospel, nor does it preclude the possibility of the renewal of the spirit of other forms of religion or of other social forms. These are very real possibilities and may well be the subject of other inquiries. Yet, in the interest of clarity of focus, this study is directed to the possibility of the revivification of the Protestant churches.

The thesis to be developed is that the "Method of Correlation", as enunciated by Paul Tillich⁴, provides the key to the solution of the problem. In the pages to follow the implications of this aspect of Tillich's thought will be explored as thoroughly as possible insofar as it bears a relation to the problems and the potentials of culture and religion. The study thus will tend to be practical rather than theoretical, ethical rather than theological. No attempt will be made to discuss or evaluate the theological system of Paul Tillich as a whole,

⁴Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), I: pp. 59-66.

or in respect to specific details, this being outside the scope of this study. However, since the method of correlation is fundamental to his system, it follows that acceptance of this principle implies substantial agreement with his system in general, if not in all details. In this study an effort will be made to demonstrate that the ethical implications of Tillich's theology have peculiar relevance to the situation of the churches in today's world.

In using this principle or method as a tool in approaching and attempting a solution to the problem the hope is advanced that an apologetic for renewal will be provided that will offer insight to the timid and understanding to the brave, as together they seek to do the Master's will.

III. THE FORMAT

Chapter Two will seek to develop a definition of the method of correlation. This will be done by reference to Tillich's own description of it, as well as by reference to his life and thought as a means of practical illustration of the way in which his concept of correlation has led him to work in what he calls "boundary situations".

Chapter Three will present pertinent aspects of Tillich's interpretation of the "spirit of capitalism" - its assumptions, its view of man, its present results and its ultimate destiny - as this relates to the method of correlation. The concept of the "spirit of capitalism" will receive detailed consideration because it is basic to an understanding of modern western culture.

Chapters Four and Five will constitute a more detailed

examination of capitalist society as it manifests itself in the modern western democracies. In these chapters the present and long term results, both of a positive and of a negative quality, will be considered in relation to the Christian doctrine of man.

Chapter Six will deal with Tillich's concept of the "Protestant principle" as it stands in contrast to the spirit of capitalism, and as it exemplifies the method of correlation. An attempt will be made to demonstrate that, whereas the capitalist spirit possesses inherent qualities that nullify its efforts at self-criticism and re-creation, the Protestant principle assumes the existence and possession of these very qualities. Therefore, Protestantism, when true to the Protestant principle, has the key to renewal, both of the churches and of society.

Chapter Seven will be an evaluation of the present situation of the Protestant churches in relation to the Protestant principle.

Chapter Eight will consider the application of the method of correlation as found in the Protestant principle to the life of the churches with the aim of providing some guidelines for the renewal of the church, to the end that it may increase in effectiveness as God's instrument of salvation.

CHAPTER II

PAUL TILLICH AND THE BOUNDARY SITUATION

It would be beyond the scope of this paper to discuss the ontological content of Tillich's thought in any comprehensive way. In contrast to the approach of Nels Ferre who argues for criticism on central rather than on peripheral issues, this study will deal principally with what might be called peripheral issues, and only incidentally with what can be called the central issue, Tillich's ontology. The subject of this study is a method consistently used by Tillich - the method of correlation - and the application of this method to the renewal of the church.

Tillich is an ontological philosopher-theologian. The question of being lies at the center of all his thinking, as indicated by his statement regarding the ontological analysis of being:

. . . let us speak of ontology as the basic work of those who aspire to wisdom (sophia in Greek, sapientia in Latin), meaning the knowledge of the principles. And, more specifically, let us speak of ontological analysis in order to show that one has to look at things as they are given if one wants to discover the principles, the structures, and the nature of being as it is embodied in everything that is.¹

This ontological principle, this awareness of Absolute Being is, for Tillich, the point of departure for the whole of his system of theology.

¹Paul Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 8.

The Deus est esse is the basis of all philosophy of religion. It is the condition of a unity between thought and religion which overcomes their, so to speak, schizophrenic cleavages in personal and cultural life.²

As a definition of ontology he offers the following:

Man is immediately aware of something unconditional which is the prius of the separation and the interaction of subject and object, theoretically as well as practically.³

It may be said that ontology is the fundamental question, asking, "What does it mean to be?"⁴ and that it asks this question of being which is one, whose qualities and elements "constitute a texture of connected and conflicting forces."⁵

Ontology is the attempt to describe this texture, to reveal its hidden nature through the word which belongs to being and in which being comes to itself.⁶

This ontological orientation is the foundation of Tillich's structure which, in taking form, draws in to itself insights from many sources in a way that is illustrated by his statement that

The best method of discovering it (the primacy of the ontological question) is a careful analysis of the writings of leading anti-ontological philosophers and of anti-philosophical scientists and historians.⁷

This sentence gives a hint of Tillich's method in the development of such concepts as the church, man, or culture. This he called the method of correlation. The method is related to the object described

²Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p.22.

³Ibid.

⁴Paul Tillich, Love, Power and Justice, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 19.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Ibid., p. 20.

⁷Ibid.

and to the system developed.

Therefore no method can be developed without a prior knowledge of the object to which it is applied. For systematic theology this means that its method is derived from a prior knowledge of the system which is to be built by the method. Systematic theology uses the method of correlation . . . The method of correlation explains the contents of the Christian faith through existential questions and theological answers in mutual interdependence.⁸

In Tillich's words,

The analysis of the human situation employs materials made available by man's creative self-interpretation in all realms of culture. Philosophy contributes, but so do poetry, drama, the novel, therapeutic psychology, and sociology.⁹

Thus, philosophy and theology, in correlation with every aspect of man's existential life, are used to develop a system which will provide answers to man's questions.

The purpose of this chapter will be to illustrate briefly the concept of "boundary" which has played a large part in the life and thought of Paul Tillich, to show its practical relation to the method of correlation, and to lay some foundation for the appreciation of the validity and usefulness of the method of correlation in the renewal of the church. It is Tillich's belief that the Protestant principle is the radical proclamation of the human border situation, and the protest against all attempts to evade it. In his life as well as in his thought Tillich has expressed this belief in every conceivable way. His use of the phrase "apologetic theology" suggests the interplay of polar elements, none of which are ultimate, but all of which are real.

⁸Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), I: 60.

⁹Ibid., I: 62.

I. ON THE BOUNDARIES OF TEMPERAMENT

It has been the lot of Paul Tillich to live consistently in what he calls boundary situations. He has experienced life in this manner perhaps more continuously than the average person, certainly has been more sensitive to its influence than is usual. Temperamentally he is a contender against the "principalities and powers" of opposing forces, as he stands on the battleground between them. Speaking of the different backgrounds and temperaments of his parents he comments,

. . . in the East a meditative bent tinged with melancholy, a heightened consciousness of duty and personal sin, a strong sense for authority and feudal tradition still alive, while the West is characterized by zest of living, sensual concreteness, mobility, rationality and democracy . . . it would seem that it was by way of them (parents) that these contradictory qualities were rooted in me - my life, inward and outward, to be enacted on the battleground.¹⁰

Because of this inheritance

again and again an eruption would be necessary to give those elements room, and often the eruptions would lead to extremes. Classical composure and harmony were not part of my heritage.¹¹

Because of this polarity of temperament he was able to appreciate the values of city and country, with both of which he had contact.

I was saved from romantic enmity against technical civilization and was taught to appreciate the importance of the big city for the critical side of intellectual and artistic life . . . and yet my tie with the country lies deeper down in my soul.¹²

Although brought up a member of the upper classes, the impressionable young Tillich was troubled by the disparity of opportunity

¹⁰Paul Tillich, The Interpretation of History, (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 4.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 4f.

¹²Ibid., p. 7.

enjoyed by people of upper and lower classes, and by the rigidity of the class structure.

As far as I can see the encounter, early and intimate, of a sensitive child of the upper classes with children of the lower classes offers only two possibilities: the development of a consciousness of social guilt, or social hatred.¹³

In evaluating his struggle with reality and imagination, Tillich says that the romantic imagination of his early life became transmuted into the philosophical imagination of his maturity, which combination prevented him from "becoming a scholar".¹⁴ This interplay of reality and imagination gradually but inevitably led him into what he calls the higher levels of play, the appreciation of art, literature and poetry, especially of the types that give expression to those contending elements of reality and imagination, or, one might say, the ideal and the actual as they are found in everyone's life and in society. The form of art that spoke particularly to Tillich was that which has become known as expressionism, which is not surprising, considering his temperament and his times. As Dixon says,

That Tillich at his best speaks from the standpoint of German expressionism is not surprising, for the formative years of his work exactly coincide with this movement, and his obsession with its principles is not a limitation but a measure of his involvement as a creative element in a greatly creative situation.¹⁵

It should be added, in modification of Dixon's comment, that Tillich finds what might be called the spirit of expressionism in all great art that portrays this struggle between the existential and the essential.

¹³Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁵John W. Dixon, Jr., Nature and Grace in Art, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1964) p. 37.

He does not limit his appreciation to that which is technically called "expressionism". Tillich finds this quality typified in art in the works of Botticelli and Grunewald, in literature in the questioning of Hamlet, in philosophy in the writings of Kierkegaard, and in poetry in the later Rilke.

All of this contributes to the "existentialism" of Tillich as it is developed in his writings and addresses, and in his practical life.

My internal struggle for the truth of traditional religion also held me fast in the sphere of theory . . . (but) Religious truth is existential truth and to that extent it cannot be separated from practice.¹⁶

Tillich, living on the boundary of temperaments, as expressed in their several manifestations, found creative value in the polarity as he undertook the task of correlating the various elements of his own personality.

II. ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HOME AND AN ALIEN LAND

Paul Tillich, like many other creative thinkers of modern times, has known loyalty to more than one land, living forty-seven years in Germany and thirty-two years in the United States. But aside from the external migration, he feels that for everyone there is a spiritual borderland on which he must live. Man may not ever rest, feeling that he has arrived, but must be continually leaving his homeland and venturing forth upon alien soil. To quote Tillich,

¹⁶Tillich, The Interpretation of History, pp. 18f.

The border of home and alien land is not merely the external boundary, drawn by nature or history, but is likewise the border of two inner forces, two possibilities of human existence The classic word for it is the command to Abraham: 'Go out from thy country - into a land that I will show thee'.¹⁷

This continual pilgrimage of a spiritual character is given further expression in such passages as the following:

The Christian . . . is to leave his own country over and over again and to go into a land that is shown to him, and to trust a promise that for him is purely transcendent.¹⁸

I always stood between home and an alien land. It was not as if I had one-sidedly made the decision for what was alien. That is true neither of the outer nor of the inner migration, the latter having begun long before the outer one.¹⁹

Speaking of his discovery of the temper of the United States, with its plurality of culture and tradition, he finds one of the prevailing, and at the same time, hopeful characteristics of this nation to be its openness. To use his own phrase, it may perhaps be said that the creative dynamic - physical, moral and spiritual - of the United States derives from its existence in a boundary situation. This nation lives on a boundary - between the old and the new world, in every way - and, theoretically at least, recognizing in no finite structure the quality of ultimacy. Instead, by believing democracy to be the ultimate ideal for society, and considering this to be expressed in the Constitution, and by judging all practical expressions of democracy according to this norm, an exemplification of Tillich's method of correlation is observed. This is a secular illustration of what is here being advanced as a

¹⁷Ibid., p. 67.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 68.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 69.

method of renewal in the churches.

A nation (referring to the United States) which unites the representatives of all nations and races can become a symbol for the highest possibility of history - mankind. That is true, even though the picture reveals dark shadows and a large gap between the ideal and reality. Mankind, as such, is a symbol for that which lies beyond history, the Kingdom of God, in which the border between home and an alien land has ceased to be a border.²⁰

III. ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN HETERONOMY AND AUTONOMY

Tillich has irrevocably committed himself to a warfare against what he calls heteronomy, in any form and in any sphere of life. Heteronomy, as used by Tillich, may be described as any system of control or force exerted on individuals or groups in an intellectual, spiritual or social realm. It is always contingent upon an ideology or an institution assuming a role of ultimacy, which is blasphemous in regard to God and inhuman in regard to man.

The immemorial experience of mankind, that new knowledge can be won only by breaking a taboo, that all autonomous thinking is accompanied by a consciousness of guilt, has been a fundamental experience of my own life. It had as positive consequences that every step in theology, ethics and political criticism encountered inhibitions which often could be overcome only after conflicts lasting for years.²¹

Tillich has fought for autonomy in whatever field of endeavor he has been engaged, including first of all his family relations. He was particularly opposed to "the most potent system of religious heteronomy, with a protest that was at once both Protestant and autonomous".²²

Tillich finds much of his religious life to be a struggle between the forms of heteronomy and the exercise of autonomy. This

²⁰Ibid., pp. 71f.

²¹Ibid., p. 23.

²²Ibid., p. 24.

heteronomic tendency is not confined to Catholicism either, for

The struggle between autonomy and heteronomy returns on a higher plane in Protestantism . . . my fundamental problem arose: the relation of the absolute, which is assumed in the idea of God, and of the relative, which belongs to human religion.²³

However, the unchecked exercise of individual autonomy may, paradoxically, set up a situation of heteronomy in a more subtle way, as is evidenced in Protestant orthodoxy. With this Tillich also battles:

The dogmatism of religion, including that of Protestant orthodoxy and the ultimate of dialectic (Barthian) theology is established in the fact that a portion of human-religious reality is garbed in the unconditioned validity of the divine . . . that this claim (to absolute authority) is established by a finite, historical reality is the root of all heteronomy and all demonry.²⁴

Believing that all forms of both heteronomy and autonomy are false and destructive, Tillich calls for a recognition of the necessity of criticism and judgment of all finite and conditioned forms by the standard of the Absolute and Unconditioned. He is "determined to stand on the border of autonomy and heteronomy, not only principally but also historically."²⁵ This, another example of the method of correlation, moves him to another principle, theonomy, which is "the condition in which spiritual and social forms are imbued with the import of the unconditional as their supporting ground and judge."²⁶ This condition, which Tillich calls theonomy, cannot or should not be considered as merely standing on the "borderline" or "boundary" between heteronomy and autonomy, which situation carries the

²³Ibid., p. 25.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 25f.

²⁵Ibid., p. 30.

²⁶Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p.293, in a chapter by James Luther Adams.

connotation of passivity. Tillich sees this to be a more dynamic or dialectical relation. Theonomy does not simply stand between, but rather surmounts the alternative between liberalism and orthodoxy, and between heteronomy and autonomy. As he says, of the alternative,

Neither capitalist autonomy nor ecclesiastical heteronomy - for both belong together - but theonomy, the free devotion of finite forms to the eternal, is the goal.²⁷

Tillich states this principle in the following words:

History comes from and moves towards periods of theonomy, i.e., periods in which the conditional is open to the unconditional without claiming to be unconditional itself.²⁸

For this 'dialectical' relation between the secular world and the Gestalt of grace I like to use the word 'theonomy', which indicates that neither ecclesiastical heteronomy nor secular autonomy can have the last word in human culture.²⁹

This is the principle which it is suggested the church be courageous enough to adopt in the search for renewal, seeking by the method of correlation to relate its existential witness to its essential message.

IV. ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

Paul Tillich has always stood on another boundary - that between philosophy and theology. Although early trained in the separate disciplines of philosophy and theology he continued to feel a dissatisfaction with their discreteness. Sensing a relation of polarity existing between them, he early felt that justification for this

²⁷Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 216.

²⁸Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 47.

²⁹Ibid., p. 220.

belief must be potentially present. He found it in Existentialism.

By the appearance of the so-called existential philosophy in Germany I was led to a new understanding of the relation between philosophy and theology.³⁰

In studying the writings of such men as Kierkegaard, Heidegger and Nietzsche, Paul Tillich came to see that the relationship of the theoretical to the existential constituted the relationship between philosophy and theology. As he sees them, philosophy and theology are divergent and convergent at the same time. As he said, on assuming his chair at Union Theological Seminary:

Philosophical Theology is the unusual name of the chair I represent. It is a name that suits me better than any other, since the boundary line between philosophy and theology is the center of my thought and work.³¹

According to Tillich, if philosophy is separated from theology it may become logical positivism, or mere epistemology, or simply history of philosophy. On the other hand, theology, separated from philosophy, may speak of God as a being beside others, or it may separate man from nature or nature from man.³²

In a paragraph taken from the afore-mentioned address Tillich's understanding of the way philosophy and theology stand in relation to each other is stated clearly and concisely:

We have searched for the object or question of philosophy, and we have discovered that a theological element, an ultimate concern, gives the impulse to philosophy. We have searched for the object or question of theology, and we have discovered that a philosophical element is implied in theology - the question of the meaning and

³⁰Tillich, The Interpretation of History, p. 39.

³¹Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 83.

³²Ibid., p. 89.

structure of being and its manifestation in the different realms of being. Philosophy and theology are divergent as well as convergent. They are convergent as far as both are existential and theoretical at the same time. They are divergent as far as philosophy is basically theoretical and theology is basically existential. This is the reason that philosophy is able to neglect its existential basis and to deal with beings as if they did not concern us at all. And this is the reason that theology is able to neglect its theoretical form and to become mere kerygma. But as theology always has created a philosophical theology, so philosophers always have tried to reach existential significance, to give a prophetic message, to found a sect, to start a religious-political movement, or to become mystics. But in doing so they were philosophical theologians and were considered as such by followers and foes. Most creative philosophers have been theological in this sense. Only noncreative philosophy cuts itself off entirely from its existential basis. It has in its hands the shell, not the substance, of philosophy. It is school and not life and therefore not philosophy, but the trading of old philosophical merchandise.³³

While elements of this stand may be challenged, by philosophers or theologians, its value, as it relates to ethics, is evident. This is the situation of creative tension centering around a concern that is related to both polar elements, or, to use another phrase, it is the method of correlation in operation on the boundary. The validity of this approach in respect to theology and philosophy will later be shown to justify its use in respect to the relations of the church and the world. In the words of R.H.Daubney,

Tillich's perpetual concern with the apologetic task of theology required that the original Biblical message should be reinterpreted by the church in terms of the boundary situation.³⁴

³³Ibid., p. 88.

³⁴R.H.Daubney, "Some Structural Concepts in Tillich's Thought and the Pattern of the Liturgy," in Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, (eds.), The Theology of Paul Tillich, (New York: Macmillan, 1952), p. 270.

V. ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN RELIGION AND CULTURE

"Culture is the form of Religion; Religion is the substance of Culture",³⁵ is a favorite phrase of Tillich's, quoted in several of his books and addresses. It is another illustration of his view of the relatedness of areas of life. Culture is thus viewed as the existent and developed patterns of a people or an age in respect to art, science, economics and politics as expressions of a generalized religious element.

Religion, on the other hand, in its purer and more restricted sense, is "direction toward the unconditional", without direct relation to the milieu from which it is directed. Religion may exist with or without conscious orientation to culture; culture may exist with or without conscious orientation to religion.

For Tillich, however, there is never a divorce, never a lack of relation in respect to religion and culture. They can be considered as distinct and separate in form and function for the purpose of analysis, but are basically rooted in the same ground and related to the same purpose - the realization of the Will of God in mankind.

Regarding the relation of religion and culture,

Religion is 'direction toward the unconditional.' Culture is direction toward the conditioned forms of meaning and their unity. Despite this contrast, however, genuine religion and vital culture have ultimately the same roots. 'Being religious is being ultimately concerned, whether this concern expresses itself in secular or (in the narrower sense) religious forms.' All sharp divisions

³⁵Tillich, The Interpretation of History, p. 50.

³⁶Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 295.

between the sacred and the secular must be eliminated in recognition of a transcendent critical and formative power which is present in both religion and culture. 'Secular culture is essentially as impossible as atheism because both presuppose the unconditional element and both express ultimate concerns.' Implied here is a dialectical view of religion and culture. Religion, in order to achieve realization, must assume form and become culture. But culture, even when it is not religious by intention, is religious in substance, for every cultural act contains an unconditional meaning, it depends on the ground of meaning.³⁶

A further comment, arising from the above remarks from James Luther Adams, must be made regarding Tillich's concern over the tendency to "absolutize" the forms of religion, which may both affect and be affected by a separation of religion and culture. One result of this situation is idolatry, regarding the religious forms as ultimate, but another and perhaps more serious danger is the abdication of religion from secular life.

It seemed to me that the dynamic character of their religion became veiled if some institutions and personalities are considered religious in themselves.³⁷

For Tillich a continuous dialectical situation of mutual interaction or correlation is demanded of both religion and culture if they are to be true to their purpose and destiny. Not only so, but man himself lives as a creature of both religion and culture, and must make his decisions from day to day in this existential situation.

Man is always put before a decision. He must decide for or against Yahweh, for or against the Christ, for or against the Kingdom of God. Biblical ethics . . . appears within a framework of concrete, personal decisions . . . Every decision is urgent; it has to be made now.³⁸

³⁶Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 295.

³⁷Tillich, The Interpretation of History, p. 52.

³⁸Tillich, Biblical Religion . . ., p. 45.

VI. ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

The church has always been my home in spite of all the criticism which I had to exercise at an early time upon church doctrine, and later upon church practice.³⁹

There are those who find it difficult to comprehend Tillich's position on the "boundary" between the objective entities of church and state, while yet appreciating the validity of such a position in the more theoretical areas of theology and philosophy, or of religion and culture. And yet, if a posture of apologetic and correlation is appropriate in the theoretical field it must surely be appropriate in the practical equivalents. There can be no fundamental discrepancy between the essential spirit of the church and its existential manifestations, even though these manifestations be partial and ambiguous at any given time and place.

There can be no doubt that, while his systematic theology contains apologetic and kerygmatic elements, Tillich is primarily an apologetic theologian.⁴⁰

How seriously he takes the kerygma or 'message' of Christianity is shown by his insistence that the theologian must work within the 'theological circle'. Whereas the philosopher of religion is 'general and abstract' in his concepts, the theologian seeks to be 'specific and concrete', entering the theological circle 'with a concrete commitment' and as a member of the Christian church.⁴¹

Tillich is appreciative of the religious values which he finds in secular society, believing as he does in the religious basis of all culture and in the interdependence of religion and culture, church and

³⁹Tillich, The Interpretation of History, p.43.

⁴⁰George F. Thomas, "The Method and Structure of Tillich's Theology," in Kegley, op. cit., p. 87.

⁴¹Ibid.

society. Thus he feels that church and society exist in roles of interaction, each offering and receiving criticism, both positive and negative, and each receiving insight and power, as they recognize and respect their mutual validity and relevance. Tillich

discovered that the modern trends of thought which are rooted in the period of the enlightenment are substantially Christian, in spite of their critical attitude toward ecclesiastical Christianity. They are not pagan as is often said of them.⁴²

At the same time, while finding religious value in this "latent church", Tillich believes that secular society does not possess the effective force to maintain the religious spirit that is essential to true culture. The church must perform that function.

. . . Only the organized church is able to carry on the struggle against the pagan attacks against Christianity. The latent church has neither the religious nor the organized weapons necessary in this struggle, though their use threatens to deepen the chasm between church and society. A latent church is a concept belonging to the situation of border, and it is the fate of countless Protestant men of our day to stand on this border.⁴³

For the church and for churchmen to stand in dialogic relation to society is not irresponsible or reprehensible, but rather represents a desire and an attempt to achieve validity and relevancy, to recognize the existential situation, and to develop a creative Christian casuistry that will be of value in translating the Gospel into action.

⁴²Tillich, The Interpretation of History, p. 43.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 48-49.

VII. THE BOUNDARY AND THE METHOD OF CORRELATION

That the destiny which was Tillich's of living on the boundary areas caused him exquisite mental and spiritual anguish was perceived by Walter M. Horton, who wrote of Tillich that

It is a marvel that interests as diverse as his can be united in one mind without pulling it apart. He has known deep mental pain for the greater part of his life.⁴⁴

Tillich's contributions to theology and philosophy are many, and will provide material for discussion for years to come, as his system is attacked, supported, refined and developed. It is his place as a mediating theologian, however, that is seen as most fruitful in this essay as an attempt is made to provide a foundation for the renewal of the church by the use of a mediating or correlating theology.

Tillich is a mediating theologian, but not

a mere middleman, exchanging the thoughts of others, interpreting them sympathetically, building out of them a purely 'eclectic' body of teaching with no firm principle of its own . . . In Tillich's case this temptation . . . is firmly resisted. When he stands 'on the boundary' between two opposing views, he listens sympathetically to both parties, and the conflict between types becomes a conflict in his own soul; but he does not solve the conflict simply by 'steering a middle course' or by 'extracting the least common denominator' or by any other mechanical expedient. He locates the major issue in each conflict, and thinks down to rock bottom, until he finds a basis on which a comprehensive solution can be erected, and into which bits of truth from each side can be fitted, but from which the errors and excesses of both sides are firmly excluded. Then he relates the solutions of various problems to one another in a comprehensive framework, so that they mutually support one another.⁴⁵

⁴⁴Walter M. Horton, "Tillich's Role in Contemporary Theology," in Kegley, op.cit., p. 46.

⁴⁵Ibid.

In this view the function of religion is dramatically different from its function as defined by Karl Barth, who heralds the great message of Christianity, but who refuses the apologetic task of interpreting it to the contemporary situation. "The message must be thrown at the situation - thrown like a stone."⁴⁶ Tillich insists, on the contrary, that it is the duty of a theologian to relate and interpret the message to those in the existential situation. He is a theologian, but above all a concerned theologian - concerned that the message be related in such a way that it can be effective. He has found that for him the situation of the boundary and the method of correlation offer the most promise for the actualization of the Gospel.

The border line between the various spheres of social life and also between the various tendencies and outlooks is, he believes, a most fruitful place for knowledge and the most fruitful place for practical decision.⁴⁷

Tillich sees this position as being true to the Protestant principle, which itself is "the theological expression of the true relation between the conditioned and the unconditioned."⁴⁸ He asks that every finite construction be seen for what it is - finite, imperfect and ambiguous - and judged in the light of the infinite. Thus, polaric elements of culture will be viewed together as creations partaking of some quality of the infinite, but also seen in the light of the ultimate which exposes the creative and the destructive elements in each. This opens a way for the creative approach of correlation. This is the Protestant principle at work, explicitly a protest against

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 31.

⁴⁷ Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 306.

idolatry in any form, and implicitly a complete surrender to God as the basis of all reality.

This concern of the Gospel with the human cultural situation has been traditionally considered to be the domain of Christian ethics. Here again the sharp distinction is blurred for Tillich, and ethics becomes the mediating aspect of theology. The question can be stated, does ethics represent a realm of absolutism, above change, or does it become a relativism that makes change the ultimate principle? Neither, says Tillich, and he returns to his ontology of love,

Love, agape, offers a principle of ethics which maintains an eternal, unchangeable element, but makes its realization dependent on continuous acts of a creative intuition . . . Love alone can transform itself according to the concrete demands of every individual and social situation without losing its eternity and dignity and unconditional validity.⁴⁸

This again provides another aspect of the basis on which a mediating and correlating theology can, with justification, be built, relating, as it does, the "Kerygma" and the "Kairos", and providing a bridge between the proclamation of the Gospel essentially and its actualization existentially. Tillich's system of theology, while it is stated in general and theoretical terms, is productive of insights of tremendous practical value to those who grapple with the problems and opportunities of the church today.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 154.

CHAPTER III

PAUL TILLICH AND THE SPIRIT OF CAPITALISM

This chapter will deal with the historical relationship of capitalism and Protestantism. Although capitalism is commonly regarded as an economic system it is important to realize that it is also an ideology which influences the life and thought of people of the western nations. Much of its power in this respect comes not only from evidence of its pragmatic success but also from the presence and influence of religious foundations.

Accordingly the classic thesis of Max Weber will first be examined in terms of its validity and relevance. In this connection the work of a modern critic of Weber will receive attention, this writer being the Swedish economic historian, Kurt Samuelsson.

Following the discussion of the thought of Weber the work of R.H.Tawney will be considered, both because of his support of Weber and because of his divergence in some important respects.

The final and major part of this chapter will be devoted to the contribution of Paul Tillich in this area of his research, both for his relation to the earlier writers and for his original contributions in this particular field.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide and make available for later use some introductory and general background interpretation of the relationship of capitalism and Protestantism. In later chapters a more detailed and specific study of the present religious and cultural situation will be made.

I. MAX WEBER

The discussion of Max Weber in this chapter is based entirely on his classic study, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism,¹ with no attempt being made to relate his conclusions in this book, which "seems to lay somewhat too exclusive an emphasis on intellectual and ethical forces,"² to the larger context of his work. Tawney, in his criticism of Weber, feels that "his analysis of these forces needs to be supplemented,"³ and that he is wrong in insisting (according to Tawney's reading of him) that causation can work only in one direction.⁴ Tawney feels that in his analysis Weber fails to take into account other forces of a cultural, political and historical nature, and that in doing so he oversimplifies both capitalism and the Protestant ethic. However, with these qualifications, Tawney feels that "Weber's essay is one of the most fruitful examinations of the relations between religion and social theory, and I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness to it."⁵

Weber himself realizes the incompleteness of his thesis, and sets himself the rather difficult goal of seeking to show "whether, how, and how much the Protestant spirit affected capitalism."⁶ He further makes a distinction between the spirit of capitalism and the capitalistic

¹Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958)

²Ibid., p. 8.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Richard H. Tawney, The Acquisitive Society, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1920), p. 262.

⁶Weber, op.cit., p. 91.

order, (as does Paul Tillich), remarking, in one passage, that "the spirit of capitalism was present before the capitalist order."⁷ The question which Weber is attempting to answer is, in Tawney's words, "simple and fundamental. It is that of the psychological conditions which made possible the development of a capitalist civilization."⁸ Talcott Parsons sees a broader perspective in the work of Weber, in that he "has helped to shift the basic problem from the question of whether and how much religion and cultural values influence behavior and society, to that of how they influence them and in turn are influenced by the other variables in the situation,"⁹ adding that the essay on the Protestant ethic is, taken by itself, only one building block in the much larger edifice that Weber himself built. Tawney feels, taking a more charitable view than Samuelsson, that "Weber argues in respect of religious movements creating conditions favorable to the growth of capitalism, while not understanding the importance of commerce, finance, industry."¹⁰ Weber has had many supporters as well as opponents,¹¹ and this itself attests to the importance of his work.

According to Weber, "Capitalism is identical with the pursuit of profit, and forever renewed profit, by means of continuous rationalistic, capitalistic enterprise. For it must be so. In a wholly

⁷Ibid., p. 55.

⁸Ibid., p. 1(c), in Forward.

⁹Ibid., Preface, p. xviii.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 6.

¹¹E.g., Proponents: Relix Rachfahl, Werner Sombart, H.E. Barnes, T. Parsons, Eli F. Hecksher, Gunnar Myrdal. Opponents: Lujo Brentano, R.H. Tawney, H.N. Robertson. These are all listed by Samuelsson as finding plausibility in Weber.

capitalistic order of society an individual capitalist entrepreneur who did not take advantage of his opportunities for profit-making would be doomed to extinction."¹²

Weber attaches great importance to the element of calculation in his definition of the capitalist spirit, and also in his description of the place of the ascetic spirit in Protestantism.¹³ Capitalism is "an economic system based not on custom or tradition but on the deliberate and systematic adjustment of economic means to the attainment of the objective of pecuniary profit . . . that is the result of movements which had their source in the religious revolution of the sixteenth century."¹⁴ In this Calvinist movement of the sixteenth century the ascetic element was of great importance, bringing the practice of thrift to the aid of the concept of diligence.

The doctrine of predestination is, according to Weber, of fundamental importance in shaping the Puritan orientation to life.

(God) is a transcendent being, beyond the reach of human understanding, who with his quite incomprehensible decrees has decided the fate of every individual and regulated the tiniest details of the cosmos from eternity.¹⁵

This leads, by Weber's reasoning, to an unprecedented loneliness on the part of the individual so that he has no help from the priest, the church, the sacraments, or even from God. This further means that he can look for no salvation (except as fore-ordained). This, together with the corruption of everything pertaining to the flesh, leads to a rejection of the sensuous and emotional elements in culture or religion,

¹²Weber, op. cit., p. 17.

¹³Ibid., p. 27.

¹⁴Ibid., p. (e) in Forward.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 104.

with the ultimate result of a disillusioned and pessimistically inclined individualism.¹⁶

The acceptance of this doctrine leads logically to a life of grim toil in, although aloof from, the world, and hence lays the groundwork for the rise of capitalism.

It is held to be an absolute duty to consider oneself chosen . . . and to attain certainty of one's own election in the daily struggle of life . . . This leads to the breeding of those self-confident saints among the Puritan merchants . . . In order to attain that self-confidence intense worldly activity is recommended as the most valuable means.¹⁷

Faith had to be proved by its objective results.¹⁸

The elected Christian is in this world only to increase the glory of God by fulfilling his commandments . . . God requires that social achievement of the Christian because He wills that social life shall be organized according to His commandments.¹⁹

The God of Calvinism demanded of His believers not single good works but a life of good works combined into a unified system.²⁰

The foregoing quotations from Weber point up his thesis that the decisive element was the conception of the state of grace, which was a gift of God, foreordained, unchangeable, the proof of which was required to be made by the believer, and which was in his religious interest. This proof involved the abjuration of all pleasures of the world or of the flesh - a life of asceticism and industry - for the glory of God alone. This in turn involved the rational planning of this life so that God would receive the greater honor. The results of this ethic in the development of the capitalistic way of life are obvious to Weber.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 103-105.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 111f.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 108.

²⁰Ibid., p. 117.

They are not so obvious to Samuelsson, who flays Weber with the accusation that

Weber's hypothesis of a direct correlation between Puritan and economic progress represents a generalization which, quite apart from the question of its factual basis, is methodologically inadmissible. The two phenomena are so vague and universal as to be incapable of evaluation by the technique of correlation.²¹

Samuelsson believes that

The economic views of the Puritans neither obstructed nor encouraged the Spirit of Capitalism (and that) this spirit expanded and thrived quite independently of religious belief.²²

Samuelsson presses three points in one section of his book which have real force:

1. General world trends during the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, such as the geographical discoveries, the openness of the mercantile nations to new ideas, the breach with the papacy in England, and the trade shift, due to geographical discoveries, to western Europe.²³ He holds these influences to be important factors.

2. His disagreement with the assertion that "All Protestant countries displayed economic vigor, and that the Catholic regions were, on the whole, economically underdeveloped."²⁴ To support this point he cites the economic vigor and expansion of the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries in such countries as the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Switzerland, Germany and Portugal. He claims that New England outpaced the southern United States in later centuries because of factors other than the religious.

²¹Kurt Samuelsson, Religion and Economic Action, (New York: Basic Books, 1961), p. 149.

²²Ibid., p. 42.

²³Ibid., pp. 96-100.

²⁴Ibid., p. 103.

3. His questioning of Weber's implication that diligence and thrift were qualities peculiar to a particular religious orientation.

The doctrine of diligence and thrift that was preached to mankind for three centuries, roughly the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth, was not unique to Protestantism, Calvinism and the Free religious sects . . . It was preached in Catholic France with the same zeal as in Switzerland and the Netherlands . . . In England, sometime before the Reformation, the abominableness of 'idle and unprofitable persons' was vigorously proclaimed . . . The abhorrence of idleness was even stronger in France, where this iniquitous phenomenon was scourged.²⁵

Samuelsson finds the development of the capitalistic spirit to be "a lengthy and gradual process . . . All attempts to assign it to a definite period, e.g., pre-or post-Reformation, are doomed to failure."²⁶ He sums up his argument with the observation that

Our scrutiny of the Puritan doctrine and capitalistic ideology, of the capitalist spirit that Weber saw personified in Benjamin Franklin and the American capitalists and captains of industry, has rendered untenable the hypothesis of a connection between Puritanism and capitalism in which religion motivated economics.²⁷

Without entering into a full discussion of Samuelsson's argument at this point, it can be said that he is correct in not asserting total causality to the religious influence, in taking account of totally different factors such as exploration, commerce, general cultural evolution, and in seeing the rise of capitalism as a long term development. But one feels also that he does not recognize and give credit to Weber for the reservations that he himself made in regard to the same areas, nor does he appear to recognize that the total work of Weber is of a very broad type, nor does he appear to note the distinction drawn between the spirit of capitalism and the manifestations of capitalism

²⁵Ibid., p. 81.

²⁶Ibid., p. 49.

²⁷Ibid., p. 153.

in culture.

Samuelsson also draws upon many religious writings to show that, among the Puritans, the Wesleyans, the Quakers and the Baptist sects, wealth was abhorrent. His conclusions from these sources are that,

In general then, if there emerges from the most important writers and preachers of the various Puritan sects a single common factor in their approach to business life and economic activity it is the exhortation to subordinate them to the requirements of Christian morality.²⁸

The anti-capitalist theme, the view that riches and the lust for them were wicked, was common (to Calvin, Aquinas, Augustine). Wealth as an end in itself was odious.²⁹

What was preached was no free-for-all capitalism of the kind that came to hold sway over the industrializing nations of the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but the business activity of a world of small traders and handicrafts, hedged around with moralistic precepts and dogmas.³⁰

Again, there is truth in these statements, but again in Weber's defense it should be said that although Weber may be in error in offering a quotation from Wesley interpreted as giving approval to the gathering of wealth, Weber is not concerned either with approbation or condemnation, but purely and simply with the question of whether the Protestant ethic has within itself that which encourages the growth of capitalism. He also distinguishes between specific teachings and techniques, which may or may not have universal relevance, and underlying religious interests, which are basic and pervasive in their influence and which are really his area of concern. The disputed passage from Wesley, which is quoted by Weber and quoted from Weber by Samuelsson, is as follows:

²⁸Ibid., p. 40.

²⁹Ibid., p. 31.

³⁰Ibid.

Wealth results from two virtues - (industry and frugality) - pleasing to our Lord, and therefore, but only therefore and under certain definite conditions, becomes worthy of approbation.³¹

Here may be included a much more pointed word from Wesley, quoted from Weber, which reads,

We ought not to prevent people from being diligent and frugal; we must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich.³²

Following the doctrine of predestination, and arising out of it, according to Weber, is the element of asceticism. In Weber's view this Protestant asceticism differs from Catholic asceticism in that rather than involving withdrawal from the world, it involves asceticism in the world.³³ Weber sees this element as a prime influence leading to the development of the capitalist spirit, preaching, as it does, that

Enjoyment of wealth is sinful. Not leisure and enjoyment, but only activity serves to increase the glory of God. Waste of time is thus the first and in principle the deadliest of sins.³⁴

One of the fundamental elements of the spirit of modern capitalism and not only of that, but of all modern culture: rational conduct on the idea of the basis of the calling, was born . . . from the spirit of Christian asceticism.³⁵

Thus Weber begins to tie together the concepts of predestination and asceticism, and to introduce the notion of rationalism, which he also finds basic to capitalism.

The demand for asceticism in the non-Lutheran Protestant tradition has further implications which are developed by Weber in his economic theory, and considered in another way by Tillich. To quote

³¹Ibid., p. 29.

³²Weber, op. cit., p. 175.

³³Ibid., p. 121.

³⁴Ibid., p. 157.

³⁵Ibid., p. 180.

Weber again on the subject of asceticism:

Here (in Puritanism) asceticism descended like a frost.³⁶

Sport was accepted if it served a rational purpose, that of recreation necessary for physical efficiency. But as a means of the spontaneous expression of undisciplined impulse it was under suspicion.³⁷

The theatre was obnoxious to the Puritans . . . That powerful tendency toward uniformity of life, which today so immensely aids the capitalistic interest in the standardization of production had its ideal foundation in the repudiation of all idolatry of the flesh.³⁸

In addition to the element of predestination, the glorification of God by toil, and the practice of asceticism Weber finds the rational quality of Puritanism a powerful force aiding in the rise of capitalism.

The spirit of capitalism is that attitude which seeks profit rationally and systematically . . . that attitude of mind has on the one hand found its most suitable expression in the capitalistic enterprise, while on the other the enterprise has derived its most suitable motive force from the spirit of capitalism.³⁹

Weber defines capitalism as a form of enterprise which methodically and systematically, and with the use of a system of bookkeeping, operates with the express intention of making profits, and he finds this element of rationality inherent in the Calvinistic way.

Asceticism looked upon the pursuit of wealth as an end in itself as highly reprehensible, but the attainment of it as a fruit of labor in a calling was a sign of God's blessing. And even more important the religious valuation of restless, continuous systematic work in a worldly calling, as the highest means to asceticism, and at the same time the surest and most evident proof of rebirth and genuine faith, must have been the most powerful conceivable lever for the expansion of that attitude toward life which we have here called the spirit of capitalism.⁴⁰

³⁶Ibid., p. 168.

³⁷Ibid., p. 167.

³⁸Ibid., p. 169.

³⁹Ibid., p. 65.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 172.

According to Tawney,

If capitalism begins as the practical idealism of the aspiring bourgeoisie, it ends, as Weber suggests in his concluding pages, as an orgy of materialism.⁴¹

Again rebutting Weber, Samuelsson sees no essential difference in outlook and conduct between the earlier Italian merchant classes and the capitalists, since they both wanted to make money and expand firms. Here again, however, it may be brought out that Weber's definition included the rational and systematic bookkeeping procedures which were largely missing in the "pre-capitalist" eras.

One point to which Weber seems to have given scant attention is mentioned more than once by Samuelsson, and this is the fear of riches on the part of the Puritan fathers. Samuelsson makes the point that out of deference to the nineteenth century financial barons the nineteenth century city preachers tend to make an identification between God and mammon. He says that in this form of preaching the burden of the sermon was not that the worship of God led to the worship of mammon, but that it was necessary to demonstrate that devotion to wealth was not necessarily an impediment to true piety. This was to counter what Samuelsson considers the anti-capitalist bias of Puritanism. "The need to assert this was all the greater because the Puritan fathers had so intensely feared the harmfulness of riches."⁴²

One may counter this statement with the suggestion that the Puritan fathers sensed the potentially dangerous results of their religious ethic, and thundered against it - giving support to Weber.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 3, comment by Tawney. ⁴²Samuelsson, op. cit., p. 69.

II. R. H. TAWNEY

R.H.Tawney, as Samuelsson indicates, generally accepts the thesis of Weber, but adds some emphases of his own, and in some ways broadens and deepens the thesis. For instance, in one place he says that, "The capitalist spirit is as old as history, and was not, as has sometimes been said, the offspring of Puritanism."⁴³ This of course is looking at the subject in a more inclusive way than is done in the particular work of Weber which has been under discussion. Tawney finds that capitalism is closely related to individualism, which is an element less heavily underscored by Weber.

Calvinism retained the theology of Jesus and repudiated his social ethics. It resisted . . . the interference in matters of business both of the state and of divines. It is this second, individualistic phase of Calvinism rather than the remorseless rigors of Calvin himself, which may plausibly be held to have affinities with the temper called by Weber, 'the spirit of capitalism.'⁴⁴

Again, as does Weber, Tawney makes a distinction between modern capitalism and the age old pursuit of gain:

Capitalism, in the sense of great individual undertakings, involving the control of large financial resources and yielding riches to their masters as a result of speculation, money lending, commercial enterprise, buccaneering and war, is as old as history.

Capitalism, as an economic system, resting on the organization of free wage earners, for the purpose of pecuniary profit by the owner of capital or his agents, and setting its stamp on every aspect of society, is a modern phenomenon.⁴⁵

⁴³Richard H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1926), p. 43.

⁴⁴Weber, op. cit., p. 44, Forward by Tawney.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 1(c), Forward by Tawney.

To the element of individualism, already added to Weber's analysis, Tawney thus further adds the free wage earner, "organized by the owner", as an essential ingredient in modern capitalism. This, too, arose from the quality of individualism inherent in the Puritan ethic. The concept of capitalism as a system, powerful, international in its scope, is also given recognition by Tawney. Finding incipient capitalism in southern Europe in the pre-Reformation era, Tawney sees the emergence of the modern state as a helpful agent in the rise of capitalism, in addition to other factors.

In the era of the early Renaissance the heart of the movement had been in Italy. In the era of the Reformation it was the Low Countries. The economic capital of the new civilization was Antwerp.⁴⁶

The state, first in England, then in France and America, finds its sanction not in religion but in nature . . . it appeals to no supernatural commission, but exists to protect individuals in the enjoyment of their absolute rights which were vested in them by the immutable laws of God.⁴⁷

And again, regarding the importance of this period, especially in England, Tawney has this to say:

The theory of a hierarchy of values, embracing all human interests and activities in a system the apex of which is religion, is replaced by the conception of separate and parallel compartments, between which a due balance should be maintained, but which have no connection with each other.⁴⁸

These developments in the political sphere are seen as providing the opportunity for the separation of functions and for the independent operation of these functions, one of which was economic activity.

⁴⁶Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p. 67.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 14.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 15.

This may be viewed, as Tawney appears to view it, not as a repudiation of the thesis of Weber, but as a broader and more sophisticated application of the same general principles.

The picture drawn by Tawney regarding the evolution of the Calvinistic principles from their religious orientation to their later economic, political and cultural orientation is strikingly prophetic of the situation that was to prevail in a later day and which was to be of such great interest to the philosophers of existentialism. In a number of passages Tawney draws parallels between the pressures of that day and those of a later day.

To the Puritan, a contemner of the vain shows of sacramentalism, mundane toil becomes itself a sacrament. Like a man who strives by unresting activity to exercise a haunting demon, the Puritan, in an effort to save his own soul, sets in motion every force in Heaven above or in the earth beneath.⁴⁹

Puritanism, according to a seventeenth century writer, presents

. . . a picture grave to sternness, yet not untouched by a sober exaltation - an earnest, zealous, godly generation, scorning delights, punctual in labor, constant in prayer, thrifty and thriving, filled with a decent pride in themselves and their calling, assured that strenuous toil is acceptable to Heaven, a people whose economic triumphs were as famous as their iron Protestantism - thinking, sober and patient men, and such as believe that labor and industry is their duty toward God.⁵⁰

Tawney also quotes another seventeenth century writer, Baxter, who says,

The Christian . . . is committed by his faith to the acceptance of certain ethical standards, and these standards are as obligatory in the sphere of economic transactions as in any other province of human activity.⁵¹

In the light of these early interpretations Tawney comments,

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 166.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 175f, quoting Petty.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 184.

The first characteristic to strike the modern reader in all this (Puritan teaching) is its conservatism. In spite of economic and political revolutions of the past two centuries how small is the change in presentation of the social ethics of the Christian faith!⁵²

Tawney sees an inevitability in the trend to secularism and economic determinism in the Puritan ethic, and a trend to the separation of the various spheres of life:

What is required of the Puritan is . . . a holy life, a system in which every element is grouped around a single idea, the service of God, from which all disturbing irrelevancies have been pruned, and to which all minor interests are subordinated. His conception of that life was expressed in the words, 'be wholly taken up in the diligent business of your calling when you are not exercised in the more immediate service of God.' In order to deepen his spiritual life he must be prepared to parrow it . . . and not thrust his fingers into needless fires.⁵³

This extreme individualism and isolation contributes to the development of an attitude of individualistic moral certainty, precluding any form of human intervention, and producing

an aristocrat, spiritually, who sacrifices fraternity to liberty, drawing from his idealization of personal responsibility a theory of individual rights which, when secularized and generalized, was to be among the most potent explosives the world has known. He drew from it also a scale of ethical values, in which the traditional scheme of Christian virtues was almost totally reversed.⁵⁴

The separation of economic and ethical interests, which was the note of this movement, was in sharp opposition to religious tradition.⁵⁵

Tawney apparently saw many of the elements of capitalistic society, which are with us today, as inherent in the religious ethic which helped to foster the development of capitalism. Such elements of

⁵²Ibid., p. 187.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 191.

⁵³Ibid., p. 201.

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 197f.

modern society as the emphasis on individual rights, the separation of functions, the secularization of modern life, the systematization and rationalization of economic life, the renunciation of the aesthetic, mass production, anonymity and the loss of the self are natural and inevitable accompaniments to the capitalistic expression of the Puritan spirit. It is with such problems that modern theologians, sociologists, psychologists and philosophers have to wrestle.

III. PAUL TILLICH

Paul Tillich's Point of View. Paul Tillich, the philosopher-theologian, brings a somewhat different point of view to this whole problem. He does not discuss the origins and relationships of Calvinism and capitalism with the same concreteness, or point to the clear cut elements of causality as do Weber and Tawney. Apparently the objective factors do not carry as much weight of concern with Tillich as do the more fundamental and intrinsic factors which operate, so to speak, behind the scenes.

From his discussion of the existing situation it appears that Tillich credits Weber with a high degree of perception in his evaluation of the factors of Calvinism in relation to the manifestations of capitalism that were observed. But Tillich is not satisfied that what was observed and what was effective was the essence of Protestantism. It was only one factor or one element that was objectified and "absolutized". Consequently, the effect on the emerging capitalism was different from that which the true "spirit of Protestantism" would have had.

Tillich would, to go one step further, support Tawney in his contention that Weber made too neat a case for the cause and effect relationship of Calvinism with capitalism. He makes many references in his writings to the "spirit of capitalism", giving it a much fuller interpretation than did Weber. To sum up these two latter points in an admittedly fanciful but, hopefully, suggestive way, it may be suggested that Tillich would express dissatisfaction with the title of Weber's essay - "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" - and would propose that what Weber actually dealt with could better be described as "The Calvinist Ethic and Practical Capitalism".

A definition of capitalism which is not Tillich's own, but which is in harmony with his thought, is given by his friend and translator, H.R. Niebuhr:

Capitalistic civilization is not a scheme of economic organization only; it is also a culture with a definitely religious character. Its civilization is built upon faith in the self-sufficiency of the human and finite world; its hope and purpose is the establishment of human control over the world of nature and mind. Natural science, technique, and capitalist economy - a trinity of powers which reinforce each other - support and control the civilization. The spirit of human and finite self-sufficiency is expressed in painting, sculpture, education, politics and religion, and gives rise everywhere to an attitude of human domination over things in which there is no respect for the given and no true appreciation for human or any other kind of individuality.⁵⁵

The philosophical and theological character of Tillich's conception of what he calls the spirit of capitalist society (as distinct from its existential objectification) is shown in his own definition:

⁵⁵Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), Preface, p. 10.

The spirit of capitalist society . . . does not mean the spirit of individual men or a class or a party. It is rather a symbol for an ultimate, fundamental attitude toward the world. It is, to be sure, a very real symbol, and in our situation it is most concretely visible in actual capitalist society, whence it derives its name. But it means something far wider than this society.⁵⁶

Thus, when Tillich speaks of the capitalist spirit he is speaking of a fundamental attitude toward life which has an essential quality, and which has power to motivate men to express this attitude in the formation of an actual and present society. He is speaking in a religious vein of something that is itself essentially religious.

Three aspects of the spirit of capitalism that are fundamental to it will illustrate this religious character. Tillich says that the capitalist spirit has roots in the eternal. In the first place science, which is an essential ingredient of capitalist society, is the expression of a desire to know Gods laws. Secondly, technology ultimately arises out of the desire to emancipate men from the controls of demonic powers. Finally, the capitalist economy is based on the need for emancipation from the shackles of every kind, which have bound man historically.

The motive power in this emancipation came out of the recognition of the sacredness of personality, out of the faith in human rights and of human worth. The power and superiority of capitalist society live in the fact that it contains these values.⁵⁷

But these goals have not been fully achieved, and what gains have been made have involved some cost. In the process of the rise of capitalism it has itself become a dominant force that assumes an unjustified ultimacy for itself.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 27.

⁵⁷Ibid., pp. 48f.

The spirit of a finitude that lives within itself is, for our time, the spirit of capitalist society. . . Capitalist society took its rise with the emancipation of economic activity from control by a superior social power and the development of an autonomous system subject only to its own laws.⁵⁸

Paul Tillich and the Protestant Principle. Paul Tillich has a unique and exalted interpretation of the "Protestant principle". This principle is not confined to what is commonly known as Protestantism, which is but a partial and often distorted manifestation of the Protestant principle, but it is also an element that can be found, to a degree, in Catholicism, Judaism, and indeed, in all religions. It can be found in any movement, religious or secular, which seeks to hold all temporality before the judgment of the eternal, all finitude up to the infinite (although a secular movement which possessed these attitudes could not be called altogether secular). The Protestant principle knows of no objectification, religious or secular, which has the quality of ultimacy. If any institution, ideology or religion assumes such ultimacy it is idolatrous.

It is against this that Protestantism protests, and assumes its negative form. It was against this assumption of ultimacy on the part of the Catholic church that the spirit of Protestantism arose, and it is against such an assumption on the part of capitalist society today that the spirit of Protestantism must protest.

Tillich speaks sharply against the popular exaggeration of Weber's thesis, which often

⁵⁸Ibid., pp. 105f.

makes it appear as though Protestantism itself were nothing but the capitalist spirit. On the contrary it may be asserted that original Protestantism was the sharpest protest it is possible to make against the spirit of self-sufficient finitude, in its ecclesiastical hierarchical as well as in its humanistic and rational form. Luther made his protest against both of these . . . in the name of that which is absolutely beyond.⁵⁹

But the Protestant principle has also its affirmative side. It seeks to relate all things - men, ideas, institutions - to the infinite and the eternal, and to bring release from the shackles of the finite and temporal forms into which life has become frozen. By destroying the idols of culture and religion to which men are chained the Protestant principle will free men to achieve higher levels of destiny.

Of course the expressions of these higher levels will themselves take on forms that partake of elements of "self-sufficient finitude", and will draw upon themselves the protest of the spirit of Protestantism. Protestantism, as Tillich defines it, knows no stopping point, but must continually seek ever more adequate expressions of man's freedom and destiny in the light of God's will.

It is the distinctive characteristic of religion that it explicitly intends and expresses in concrete symbols the reference of time to eternity. Religion seeks to be direction of the conditioned toward the Unconditioned. It stands in essential antithesis, therefore, to a culture whose fundamental principle is the self-sufficiency of the finite. It stands in essential antithesis to the spirit of capitalist society.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 191f.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 158.

Paul Tillich and the Relation of the Spirit of Capitalism and the Protestant Principle. Calvinism was a particular form of Protestantism which developed out of the Reformation and which flourished in Switzerland and in England. It also exhibited particular characteristics, such as the democratic structure, voluntary membership, asceticism and individualism, which brought it into close association with the emerging capitalist society. In the partnership and eventual conflict which developed, the capitalist society was victorious over Calvinism. The motive power of the above mentioned elements became eventually too strong for Calvinism to cope with, and prepared the soil for the individualism of capitalist society, the emasculation of the state, and the fundamental significance of the individual.⁶¹ This, as mentioned above, was not the whole of Protestantism, but was that aspect of it which, in part, provided a favorable ground for the development of the capitalist society of the modern western world.

The fundamental virtues recognized in capitalist society are:

1. Economic efficiency, developed to the utmost degree of ruthlessness, on the part of the leaders.
2. Submissive acceptance of their place in the great machine of the whole economic life on the part of those led.
3. Obedient subjection on the part of all to the conventions of bourgeois custom.
4. Impersonal charity for the support of the economically helpless.⁶²

These virtues, practised assiduously, as they have been in greater or lesser degree in western culture for the past three hundred years, have produced certain results. These results, which will be discussed in

⁶¹Ibid., p. 199.

⁶²Ibid., p. 110.

later chapters, have a twofold effect on men, on the one side negative and on the other positive. On the positive side it will not be disputed that capitalist society, with its efficiency, organization and technology has

emancipated men from finite holy things which claim for themselves the holiness of the eternal; it releases them from a sanctified bondage to things and exalts personality above the whole realm of things.⁶³

But, in another sense, things have become the master of men:

At the same time, however, it confines personality by pressing it into endless service in the rule over impoverished things; thus personality itself is impoverished and devoted to the world of the finite. This is the effect of the capitalist spirit in liberal economy.⁶⁴

Although he has a historian's and a philosopher's interest in the genesis of such movements as Protestantism and capitalism it is not this which is the primary concern of Tillich. Tillich is concerned with the existential situation in which man now finds himself as a result of the development of the modern age with its elements of the sanctified and the demonic.

Tillich feels that the Reformation, coming as it did at the time of the opening of men's eyes to the possibilities of the modern era, was, or rather should have been, the interpreter, in this "kairos", of the message of the New Creation. Jesus the Christ, as the incarnation of the Eternal in objective form, gave to man the pattern for eternal renewal of life on successively higher levels. Jesus destroyed the myth of the self-sufficiency of the finite for his day, for his people, making possible the rediscovery of the power of love over law in any

⁶³Ibid., p. 107.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 107f.

kairos, as was incompletely and abortively done in the Reformation. The Reformation, coming when it did, found itself contending with movements which were arising at the time, and which, to some extent at least, were aided by it. Aspects of these movements have been discussed above, and further implications and results will be studied in later chapters.

The power of this capitalist spirit was greater than that of Protestantism, so that the church, finding itself powerless in the face of science, technology, and capitalist economy,

retreated, recognizing modern science without any reservations and claimed for itself as its exclusive field the realm of faith, in the firm confidence that it was relieved in this way of all further conflict with science . . . It was a retreat, a retirement along the whole line, which, to be sure, saved religious life from utter destruction, but reduced it by and large to a mere side issue.⁶⁵

The situation now is that

the forms of the life process have become completely independent of the source of life and its meaning. They are self-sufficient and produce a self-sufficient present.⁶⁶

The crux of the situation and the real point of Tillich's concern may be clearly seen in these words:

The spiritual situation has a meaning. It is an extreme example of a self-assertive, self-sufficient type of existence. This applies to mathematical natural science . . . and to world ruling technique . . . and to capitalist economy which seeks to provide the greatest possible number of men with the greatest possible amount of economic goods, which seeks to arouse and satisfy ever-increasing demands without raising the question as to the meaning of the process which claims the service of all the spiritual and physical human abilities. In all this there is no trace of self-transcendence,

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 45.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 48.

of the hallowing of existence. The forms of the life process have become completely independent of the source of life and its meaning.⁶⁷

In other words, man has a civilization without God, even though there is much religion. But

Man shares with other animals the necessity of maintaining and perpetuating his species; in addition, as a natural creature, he has what is peculiar to himself, an inclination to the life of the intellect and of society - 'to know the truth about God and to live in communities'.⁶⁸

This may be taken to mean that man's needs are to be regarded as existing on four levels, all of which need satisfaction if he is to achieve full manhood in the biblical sense:

1. The Natural level - the satisfaction of basic animal needs and appetites, later intellectualized into aesthetic satisfactions.
2. The Intellectual level - the recognition of man as a cognitive being, and the exercise of cognitive functions.
3. The Social level - the expression of man's individuality in community.
4. The Religious level - the knowledge and experience of God, the "ground" of man's being.

The tragedy of man today is that, despite unprecedented achievements in the scientific, technological and economic areas, man fails to achieve true satisfaction in the more truly human areas of life. In fact there are those who will say that in a sense people of today

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 47f.

⁶⁸Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, p. 25, The inner quotation is from Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, 2a 2ae div 1 Qiii art. viii.

are less satisfactorily integrated in a human and religious way than were people of earlier times. Man's existential situation today is one of deep anxiety, alienation and disintegration. What does religion have to offer? This is the question that will be asked below. There are two futile alternatives that religion may take, according to Tillich:

It may seek to maintain itself in all its ancient forms with their reference to the eternal, and with them stand in opposition to the self-sufficient forms of culture. This is what orthodoxy or clericalism did but . . . it becomes increasingly sterile. The other possibility is that religion become hospitable to the forms of capitalist culture, take up within itself the opposition to itself and be driven ultimately to complete surrender. This is the fate of liberal Protestantism, liberal Judaism, Catholic Modernism.⁶⁹

A creative alternative to these fatal solutions is

to make two approaches at the same time . . . the approach from culture and the approach from the church. In culture the system of finite forms of self-sufficient character needs to be broken, and the way to the Unconditional sought out. In religion the identification of the Unconditioned with definite forms of the past needs to be abandoned while its unconditional character in the face of time and all existent things be not given up . . . Both these approaches run together more and more despite the tensions that exist between them.⁷⁰

Tillich is saying that the answer to our twentieth century predicament is to be found in religion - in that religion which lives according to the Protestant principle. This form of religion seeks to maintain a continuous dialectic between the existent forms of culture and religion and the Unconditioned, continually correcting and re-evaluating the forms in the light of God's truth as it is revealed to men through the experience of participation in the New Creation.

⁶⁹Tillich, The Religious Situation, pp. 158f

⁷⁰Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

POSITIVE RESULTS OF A SOCIETY BASED ON THE CAPITALIST SPIRIT

The remarks which follow, having to do with the situation obtaining in a capitalist society, have reference to a typically western, democratic, largely Protestant country, such as the United States of America. To a lesser degree they would also have reference to western Europe and to the British Commonwealth, all of these areas having felt the influence both of the capitalist spirit and of the Protestant principle. It is assumed that, with the qualifications and reservations previously noted, there is a degree of consanguinity initially and of interaction subsequently during the course of history between capitalism and Protestantism, the combined force contributing, along with other factors, to the present situation.

It is further assumed, for the purposes of this study, that the capitalist age takes its rise from the time of the Renaissance, and the Protestant age from the time of the Reformation. It is not suggested that the two streams were identical in content, or that they merged to form a single stream, but rather that there were elements in each tradition that were mutually supportive. Thus they each drew strength from the other, which enabled them, together, to be powerful forces in shaping the course of history in western Europe and America during the last four hundred years. In this chapter recognition will be given to the salutary effects resulting from the presence of these forces.

Heteronomy and History. As Paul Tillich has shown, in his development of a philosophy of culture, the history of mankind has been the history of life lived under "heteronomy". Heteronomy, during the course of human life, has taken different forms, but has always represented the subjection to the rule of another being or power. These powers may increase or decrease, may overlap or combine, may exert explicit or implicit force, and may be recognized or unrecognized.

For many generations man was subservient to nature, limited by his environment, occupied almost wholly by the simple struggle to remain alive. At a later time in man's development, and throughout the greater part of recorded history, the masses of men lived under the rule of their masters. The masters possessed the power of life or death over the subjects, and exercised their lordship with varying degrees of benevolence or malevolence, dictated by whim or circumstance. In any case, the great majority of people throughout history have not had the opportunity to realize their potentialities as human beings, created in the image of God.

Another form of heteronomy has been religion, both in its primitive form and in its more sophisticated forms, as it imposed sanctions for the regulation of many or all aspects of human life. The effectiveness of an ecclesiastical heteronomy is not affected by its existence as myth, tradition, custom, ordinance, command or law; a religious custom can be as powerful a directive as an objectively enunciated law.

Still another form of heteronomy which exerts a powerful influence is the state, which carries added strength because of its character

of partaking in some measure of both divine and human origins. Men are controlled in many aspects of their lives, both implicitly and explicitly, by the ever-present leviathan which both protects and threatens, both frees and restricts, both gives and demands.

The Renaissance and the Reformation. The breakthrough to human autonomy was occasioned by the phenomena of the Renaissance and the Reformation, and the concomitant movements of the age. This is not to say that these two movements were altogether responsible for man's emergence from the subjection of the reason and of will, or that the rebirth could be precisely pinpointed in space and time. The influence of many other factors is recognized during the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as well as the movement of history in the Middle Ages in preparation for the breakthrough. Giving due consideration to the place of many factors, it may still be said that the powerful spiritual and intellectual forces contained in the Renaissance and the Reformation were the effective ground of action for the emergence of modern man, the autonomous person.

The sense of autonomy aided in the awakening of man mentally as well as spiritually. In the secular realm the rediscovery of the classical models revived an interest in the arts and letters and gave incentive to extend the bounds of human knowledge in depth as well as in breadth. The eventual results of this surge of knowledge were not limited to the intellectual and the aesthetic. The inventive powers of men were liberated and stimulated, and energies were directed to the improvement of material well-being, leading also to the beginnings of a revolution in commerce, industry, transportation and other related

fields of social activity. Men began to discover that by the exercise of their powers of intellect they could find many new aspects of autonomy that had been hitherto unrealized.

As men began again to study the natural world they began to discover the existence and the operation of the laws of nature. The realization dawned that the universe was an orderly one, with cause and effect relationships taking place in a comprehensible manner. Thus began the deliverance from the bondage of superstition occasioned by the traditional belief in an enigmatic, unpredictable and malevolent universe. This was accompanied by a gradually developing protest against those who were presumed to possess the knowledge and techniques which enabled them to control the mysterious powers which guided the destinies of men, or at least to mitigate the effects of their wrath. This drift away from the heteronomic religion of the day was both caused by, and in turn contributed to, the growth of the feeling of self-reliance, or self-autonomy.

The sense of individual worth which was being generated under the stimulus of the Renaissance and the Reformation had far-reaching consequences in many of the realms of theoretical and practical life, but none more signally than in the spiritual realm. For this the Reformation movement was primarily responsible. Many streams of religious thought, some of long duration, nurtured and given utterance by many men, converged at the point in time and space which Tillich would call the Kairos - the right time. In Luther the rebellion against the concept of religious heteronomy, which had long been stirring, broke through its fetters. In one explosion it destroyed forever the

blasphemous fiction of an omniscient and omnipotent religious institution.

The individual man himself was found to be an autonomous person. At the same time a qualification must be made, in that the Reformation did not give to man an autonomy which made him as a god, but rather described him in biblical terms as being in the image of God. Man was envisioned as a creature of infinite worth, given life and personality by the God who is love, for personal and immediate fellowship with Him. The Reformation released man from two possible types of heteronomy - the objective heteronomy of an all-embracing religious institution, and the anarchic heteronomy of unrelated self. To put it another way, the Reformation delivered man from the smothering and paralyzing effect of external authority, and from the equally destructive effect of complete isolation of self. The Reformation freed man from creatureliness and gave him the opportunity to become truly man, in the Christian sense.

The Modern Age. The congruence of capitalism, the Renaissance, and the Reformation, together with the supportive action of other cultural and political factors has produced what in the western world may be called capitalist democracy.

This capitalist society has resulted in certain very distinct benefits to the human race. Man has become almost completely independent of the elements of nature, being able to bend them to his will. He is well on his way to "having dominion over" the earth and all that is in it.

Man is thus able to satisfy all his creaturely wants with an ever-decreasing cost in time and labor, thereby freeing himself to

become more and more differentiated from the other creatures of God's creation. He has become, and will increasingly become blessed with the opportunities to cultivate his more distinctly human qualities, developing the mental, spiritual and emotional faculties with which his Creator endowed him. He is freed also to allow the other side of his nature, the social, to unfold as he immerses himself in the development of his potentialities as a social being. Such concerns as aesthetics, recreation, social concerns, government are receiving more and more attention as men find that they have more time and resources available.

This chapter will seek to develop in more detail some of the more definitely positive results accruing from capitalist society. In this section and the one following an assumption of general agreement with the thesis of chapter three will be made. The capitalist spirit itself will occupy the central place as the benefactor, in this chapter, and as the malefactor, in chapter five, realizing that the capitalist society, as it exists today, is a product of the union of the essential spirit of capitalism and the existential elements of the situation in which it rises and flourishes. The discussion in this and the following chapter will have as its purpose the laying of a foundation for the understanding of the modern situation from a Christian point of view, so that in following chapters a positive and creative approach to the problems and opportunities may be proposed.

I. THE RELEASE OF INDIVIDUAL CREATIVITY.

The Concept of Freedom and Equality. It is almost axiomatic to say that two of the cardinal virtues fostered by the capitalist way of life are freedom and equality. The "free enterprise system" is a system which, in theory at least, allows everyone who has the desire and the ability, to be his own master and to climb the economic ladder of his choice. The height to which he may climb is dictated only by his own ability and energy. The Horatio Alger tradition flourishes in a capitalist society. One also has freedom of other kinds as well, freedom of travel, of selection of a mate, of choice of neighborhood, these and other freedoms being related to and aided by the capitalist orientation toward the development and use of all potential and available talent. Such talent is released as people have freedom.

This freedom is written into the law of the land, which then also brings about the existence of equality. Capitalism requires the abilities and knowledge of all people, and, capitalism being one of the dominant forces in the western democracies, implicitly lends its weight to the enactment of laws promoting both freedom and equality. This, then, gives opportunity to use that freedom in the economic system, to the advantage of the system and the satisfaction of the individual. Since capitalism requires expansion of production and of consumption its weight is thrown on the side of increasing freedom and equality.

In the course of this development the artificial limits placed on people in the past tend to be removed, and an "open" society created, in which the only limits to an individual's development are the natural

limits of supply and demand, and strength and ability. The capitalist system in ideal operation allows complete freedom to develop one's potentiality and to achieve selfhood; even in its imperfect operation it expresses this ideal to a considerable extent.

The Concept of Responsibility. The concept of freedom implies also the concept of responsibility. Freedom and responsibility exist in polaric balance, mutually supportive of each other. Capitalism assumes a degree of rationality in general among its practitioners, not just in bookkeeping but also in social responsibility, to provide a stable and sane environment in which the system can operate. Puritanism, too, with its ascetic bent, induces a sense of responsibility. These elements, plus the quality of self-interest characteristic of the capitalist way, encourage a sense of responsibility, which redounds not only to the benefit of the economic aspect of a capitalist society, but to its political, legal and social aspects as well.

People in this form of society find adequate motivation to put their abilities to use in maintaining and improving the quality of the communities in which they live, by participating in governmental and civic affairs. This is most noticeable in the local community, where the elements of practicality and individualism, which are innate aspects of the capitalist spirit, are most clearly seen. A sense of responsibility is a motive force in the formation of "citizens' committees", and in the willingness to serve at the local political level in many ways.

A by-product of this activity is the discovery and development of talent. Most serve in volunteer capacities, while those who do make

a career of public service often accept considerable private sacrifice. The development of a sense of individual responsibility for the public welfare is one of the positive results of a capitalist economy.

The Spirit of Inquiry. A further asset, arising out of the presence of freedom, equality and responsibility, is the spirit of inquiry. Advancement and personal growth, encouraged in a free society, are aided by the pursuit of knowledge, in the personal sense. Also, the desire to serve is given reality as one is mentally equipped to serve. In yet another sense, where the heteronomic strictures against the acquisition of knowledge are removed, and the society is known to profit by expansion of knowledge, there is incentive to inquire as to the yet unknown.

II. THE INCREASE IN THE REALM OF KNOWLEDGE

The Increase in Educational Involvement. The increased value put on education is one of the positive contributions of the capitalist spirit. In contrast to earlier times, education is not the prerogative of the privileged few, or of the church and clergy, but is recognized as a fundamental right, in fact, it might be said, a duty, attested by the legal requirement of a certain minimal level of education for all. It is recognized, by the state as well as by individuals, that the acquisition of knowledge is prerequisite to the full development of the individual's potentialities as well as to the adequate contribution of the person to the general welfare.

Education is not only sought after on a scale hitherto unknown,

but is being made available to an increasing degree by both private and public facilities. The procurator's question, "What is truth", although perhaps arising out of cynicism in its original formulation, is now being taken seriously by great numbers of people. The fact that nearly eighty percent of all the scientists who have ever lived are alive today bears witness to the overwhelming increase of scientific knowledge in recent years.¹

In addition to the acquisition of a formal education there exists a much greater degree of sophistication in regard to world events and people, near and far, and in every aspect of life. Radio and television, newspapers, books and magazines, and travel are all used, not only for their entertainment value, but also for the furtherance of education.

The Increase in the Scope of Knowledge. Not only has knowledge become the concern of an increasing number of people under the aegis of capitalist democracy; it has also greatly increased in scope. In an open, free and pluralistic society there is no realm of being that is closed to the searching eye of the inquirer. Knowledge, freely sought, has a cumulative effect, as each advance opens the possibility for inquiry in other directions in an apparently infinite progression.

This urge for wider knowledge is of course stimulated by the freedom offered to search for the truth, and by the utilitarian values of knowledge in an expanding capitalist society. In both cases it can

¹George J. Warheit, Acting on Mission, (Philadelphia: Stewardship Council of the United Church of Christ, 1965), p. 6.

be seen as a positive contribution to the development of the individual and the welfare of the state.

The Increase in the Depth of Knowledge. The impetus to continual improvement and increased efficiency inherent in capitalism as applied to the production, distribution and consumption of goods has a qualitative as well as a quantitative impact on the intellectual enterprise. The urge not only to do more but to do it better is also applied to the acquisition of knowledge. The spread is increasing in breadth, but the penetration is also increasing in depth, as an ever-increasing number of scholars pursue research in extremely concentrated areas. The results of this combination of generalization and specialization are manifest in a large number of important breakthroughs in recent years. While the value of certain achievements in research may appear questionable to the layman, there is little real doubt that in the aggregate, as they represent intellectual progress, they also herald progress in other realms of human life and concern.

The Discovery of the Realm of Law. It is sometimes said that to an honest and determined seeker for truth nothing is sacred. This may be said derogatorily, carrying the implication that truth may be destructive. This attitude betrays a reliance on what Tillich would call a finite which has been absolutized, which improperly assumes the quality of ultimacy, and which therefore usurps the place of Truth, which is One. The presence of various "finite ultimates" produces a condition of intellectual chaos and superstition.

In contrast to this, the trend of modern science, under the

impetus of free inquiry, is to place less and less reliance on the ultimate validity of any intellectual or scientific statement, and on the other hand, to envision the possibility of a coherent structure as the ground of the universe, to which all subsidiary statements must be subject. This point of view is subject to the charge of relativism, of course, with the implied criticism of insincerity and irreligion, as cherished beliefs and institutions come under attack in the name of truth.

Actually, however, there is real justification for believing that this search for ultimate truth (which must always remain a search), rather than constituting a menace to the faith and knowledge of mankind, may be seen as of immense eventual credit to the human race. Not only that, but it is in harmony with Jesus' insight, as he said, "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." One aspect of this freedom is the deliverance from the bondage of viewing the world through eyes of fear and superstition, to the privilege of seeing it as a creation of the divine Mind, orderly and purposeful.

III. THE INCREASE IN MATERIAL WELFARE

The Standard of Living. The motivation which has been considered to be the unique creation of capitalism arises from what is variously described as self-interest, individual initiative, free enterprise. The individual, being a free and autonomous person, governed by the twin concepts of both the privilege and the responsibility of maximum achievement, gives expression to this philosophy by personal activity in many phases of life, most notably in the economic sphere, as has

already been noted. To accomplish this, as referred to above, there is a great search for knowledge and techniques.

All this results in a general strengthening of the economic sphere in all respects. A revolution has been taking place in one of the most conservative areas of life - the agricultural - which has greatly increased the yield per acre, reduced the man hours required, standardized and improved the quality of crops produced. This has been accompanied by far-reaching changes in the life of those engaged in farming, so that farmers now live on a material and cultural standard equivalent to that of their city brothers.

The continued development of the assembly line and mass production techniques in the production of raw materials and the manufacture of finished goods has likewise raised the standards of quality and of quantity in the industrial sector of the economy. This has resulted in shorter hours, higher wages and other added benefits for the workers, higher productive capacity for owners and management, and higher profits for stockholders.

In the distribution sector of economic life similar far-reaching changes have been brought about by the application of psychological, sociological and actuarial principles, greatly increasing the desire to acquire, and the ability to provide, goods of all kinds.

As a result of such tremendous advances in the traditional industries a virtually new industry has been created in recent years. This is the service industry, which has arisen to meet the needs of vast numbers of people engaged in producing the nation's goods, and requiring services of diverse types, such as trucking services, repair services,

restaurants, hotels and many others. The factories, farms and market places themselves require services in order that they may function most efficiently.

All of these factors act and react upon one another, having a cumulative result of great worth. The principle value of this is in making possible the high standard of living characteristic of the capitalist democracies.

From the Creaturely to the Human Life. The exercise of the capitalist spirit in the free democracies has largely removed the fear of loss of life by starvation. Where there is actual danger in this respect it is because of a breakdown in some part of the system, or due to some cause residing in the persons concerned. The fact that notwithstanding the operation of farms and factories at considerably less than capacity there are increasing surpluses of goods proves that it is theoretically possible to provide adequately for all.

A similar situation exists in regard to the need for protection from the elements. Skills and the availability of materials both in regard to clothing and housing are such that protection from the elements can be assured for everyone.

Most of the physical scourges that have plagued men for centuries have also been eliminated or have been rendered definitely less harmful, due to the characteristic energy directed toward the solution of these problems, under the impetus of the capitalist system. Men are now free from many of the dread diseases of the past, and able to live a healthy and productive life for themselves and for society.

Consequently, man now is to a large extent freed from the

pre-occupation with the problem of preserving life and limb and of keeping body and soul together that occupied such an inordinate amount of time in earlier stages of history. With the satisfaction of his creaturely needs more easily accomplished he has both more time and more resources to direct to the cultivation of his more specifically human qualities. It is difficult for people to be able to give attention to the development of their artistic and intellectual capacities while they must concentrate on the filling of their bodily needs. The capitalist system has aided in meeting this problem in the development of the materially high standard of living.

The Release of Time and Energy for more Human Concerns. One of the outstanding features of the capitalist democracies in the twentieth century, especially in America, is the use of available extra time and money in the pursuit of non-creaturely satisfactions. The "high standard of living" in the material sense has, for the vast majority of people become a fact, and accepted almost as a right. Now the attention is being turned more and more to the non-material satisfactions.

Recreation is the first activity to receive attention, play being of an almost instinctual character. Both the spectator sports and the participant sports are widely engaged in by people of every class and region. Among these activities may be included the possession and use of boats and auto trailers, seashore and mountain cabins, which are finding increasing popularity and use. Travel, by all available means and to all parts of the nation and the world, is no longer the luxury of the rich, but is enjoyed by all. Rest, relaxation and refreshment of mind and body have become a major interest of the people.

A developing appreciation of the aesthetic side of life is also noticeable as people are blessed with the time and resources which make possible the enjoyment of and participation in the intellectual and artistic pursuits. Books of all kinds are printed in ever-increasing numbers, ranging through the whole spectrum of human thought, and find their way into the cottages as well as into the mansions. Music, both serious and popular, has also become the property of the many, rather than of the few, with records, receiving and reproducing equipment and concert tickets also being bought in ever-increasing numbers. Art, too, is coming in for its share of attention, as it speaks in its peculiar way to the needs of man's inner self. Serious art is being made available to the public through public and private means, and is being viewed with ever-increasing appreciation and discrimination.

In addition to recreation and aesthetics, modern man, in his new-found wealth and emerging enlightenment, is finding a degree of fulfillment and expressing his concern in the service of his fellows. This concern and activity takes many forms, some of them formal and some informal, some as an avocation and some as vocation, the people serving and the people being served ranging over the whole spectrum of human life.

In America there is a growing recognition that, beyond the building of a great society in the physical sense, there is the need also of building a great society in the mental, emotional and spiritual sense. The virtues that have enabled men to build a capitalist democracy can now be turned, in some degree at least, to the cultivation of the inner man.

IV. THE CONCOMITANT RISE IN THE RECOGNITION OF HUMAN WORTH

The Spread of Democratic Ideals. The foregoing contributions of the capitalist state to human welfare have been as effective, if not more effective than religion in furthering the spread of democratic ideals and practices. In fact, in some respects, religion has been an agent in perpetuating the double standard of citizenship,² whereas the secular element of society has encouraged the participation of all citizens. As people of varying cultural and racial backgrounds have been drawn into the economic activity of the state, have begun to climb the economic ladder, and have achieved higher levels of education, they have also been drawn into the democratic process of government, at least to some extent. They have also begun to find an entry into hitherto forbidden areas of the business, professional and educational world, at all levels. The Horatio Alger myth in regard to economic achievement and the log cabin myth in regard to socio-political achievement are being shown to have real substance.

Participation in Breadth and in Depth. The dynamic and open quality of the capitalist-democratic society as it exists in America has encouraged participation in all areas of society by people of greatly diverse beliefs and backgrounds, both native born and foreign born. This has brought a richness and diversity to the society which is almost without parallel. A pluralistic society such as this, which is a phenomenon unknown before the rise of the capitalist democracies, is

²Kyle Haseldon, Racial Problems in Christian Perspective, (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

marked by a high degree of economic, cultural and political vigor, even of volatility. Such a society, by its nature, may not be content to show excessive deference to tradition, but must be continually evaluating its course in the light both of its tradition and of its possible future destiny. This makes for a dynamic, creative society.

New Discoveries of Educability. It is being found, as more people of diverse cultural backgrounds are drawn into the main stream of economic life, that many of the stereotypes and prejudices regarding innate ability of culturally deprived people must be abolished. The performance of men and women of alien and foreign language backgrounds, of Negro heritage, or of backward areas of the nation, when given the needed training of the necessary type, under favorable conditions, has many times disproved these judgments. Under the stimulus of such happenings many culturally oriented tests of a psychological or intelligence type are being re-studied, and educational procedures re-developed to meet the person in his situation. Under this movement many more people are being brought to new levels of personal integration and dignity.

The Contribution of Communication and Mobility. A dynamic and creative society, marked by an apparently insatiable search for knowledge, develops a vast and efficient system of communication. Included in this are the radio, television, cinema, newspaper and telephone media. The increasing use of these media by all sections of the populace assures knowledge of people and events in all parts of the nation, and knowledge results in an increase of understanding and

respect.

The great mobility of the people, aided in respect to recreational travel by prosperity, and required in respect to employment by the exigencies of the capitalist system, has also resulted in a greater degree of confrontation and communication with people hitherto unknown.

Both of these factors have been, and continue to be, of considerable value in overcoming a condition of provincialism, with its accompanying feelings of fear or disrespect of the unknown person. As people are brought together, as they work, play or study together, as they travel and live in varied areas of the nation, they develop an appreciation for others, and in turn are understood more fully than if the contacts had not taken place.

Men, seen face to face, can be known. As they become known to one another as people rather than as stereotypes, mutual appreciation follows, bringing with it a more wholesome understanding of human worth.

V. "ONE WORLDISM"

Capitalism above Nationalism. It has been observed by more than one competent observer that capitalism has become a world movement, transcending national and geographical limits. The international ramifications of trade and commerce have to some extent influenced the legal and political structures of the nations, both internally and in relation. In this connection Paul Tillich believes that the capitalist spirit is international, existing in Communist Russia as definitely as it does in capitalist America. The spirit of capitalism, underlying the outwardly different economic and governmental forms, is the same spirit

in each case. In support of this contention he states that:

In its inner structure capitalist society stands in complete antithesis to the principle of nationalism . . . If the principle of nationality is maintained nevertheless it now receives the meaning of an association for the promotion of common interests in the world economic system with national armaments at its disposal for the sake of economic expansion.³

Tillich continues his discussion, drawing out the destructive effects of this world economic system. It is the purpose here, however, to observe that there are benefits as well as harm in the organization of the world as an international trading mart.

If it be granted that national governments are the instruments used by capitalism in ensuring the smooth and efficient functioning of the system of world trade and commerce (not forgetting that there are other important functions of governments) this has the effect of producing certain benefits for mankind.

One beneficial consequence lies in the very fact of the elevation of a way of life internationally, beyond the provincialism of nationalism. Internationalism tends to transcend the narrowness, exclusivism and isolation which frequently accompanies the spirit of nationalism, and helps to develop a sophisticated and cosmopolitan spirit, which is one criterion of maturity, and something to be desired.

Instruments of Law and Order. International trade and commerce bring people of all nations into relationship with one another, not only in a strictly business sense, but also in social, political and cultural ways. In these meetings it becomes evident that people are basically

³Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, (New York: Meridian Books, 1956), p. 45.

the same in regard to their needs, material as well as spiritual. It also becomes evident that the property and welfare of one group or nation is correlated rather closely with that of other groups or nations and that the welfare of all can best be sought in an atmosphere of law and order.

The concept of international law arises, leading to the development of a complex international machinery of protection and regulation, redounding to the benefit not only of those directly involved in international commerce, but also to individual citizens who ultimately receive benefit.

To a large extent the United Nations organization, while popularly regarded as a peace-making and war-preventing agency, has its roots also in the need for law and order on an international scale to insure that business may be carried on with safety and efficiency. The benefits of such an organization, dedicated to the concept of brotherhood and peace, are too well known to require elaboration.

The Raising of the Standard of Living. It may with confidence be stated that of all the influences which have been at work to raise the standard of living of people in nations such as those in Asia and Africa, religion and capitalism have been the most effective and far-reaching. The religious missions, in establishing schools, hospitals and training centers of all kinds, in addition to the proclamation of the Gospel, have done an inestimable service to the peoples of the world, in awakening them to a realization of their capacities for learning and for self-fulfillment.

The capitalist "missions" have been of a different sort, being

plantations, factories, oil wells, transportation services, or other economic enterprises, but they have been no less effective in awakening people from their slumber of centuries, and in instilling in them a desire for a better way of life. These two influences, religion and business, working sometimes together, sometimes separately, and sometimes antagonistically, have been effective agents in making possible the revolution which has come about in remote parts of the world.

Higher Aspirations. In the new Africa and the new Asia, as in other parts of the world, the gain in physical and material welfare is but the first step in a long journey of betterment. For man does not live by bread alone. In providing the incentive and the means which made this first step possible the nations of the western world have been of assistance in bringing to birth the new nations of Africa, and in re-awakening the old nations of Asia.

In many parts of the world a social revolution is taking place, inspired in part by these western influences, and in part by other circumstances. New nations are being formed, new governments are taking control, old barriers are being broken down, old taboos overcome. Everywhere there is the ferment of progress.

Men of the new nations have joined the human race, meaning that they have made a beginning toward taking their rightful place among the people of the world. However dim it may be, a vision has been experienced of the possibilities inherent in every life, as the potentialities of that life are developed. Men everywhere are learning to straighten their backs and stand erect, to raise their eyes and

look ahead, to lift their feet and march forward, to awaken their minds and learn what it is to be a man.

Not only are the men of the new nations reaching out to join their brethren, but men of the older nations are reaching out to welcome them into the circle of the privileged. As the circle expands, encompassing more and more of the world's people, the vision of the One World comes closer to reality.

Summary. It has been the purpose of this chapter to suggest that the positive values named owe their existence, at least in part, and in greater or less degree, to the spirit of capitalism and its manifestation - the capitalist society. This is not to deny that there are other powerful influences at work shaping the course of history, but it is maintained that one of the more important beneficial influences existing in the world is the operation of trade and commerce as generated and stimulated by the free enterprise system.

The positive contributions of capitalism have been discussed in this chapter in order to provide a frame of reference for the discussion of the negative results in the following chapter.

A realistic appreciation of the fact that both creative and destructive elements are inherent in the roots of modern culture will make it possible for the church to relate to society in a creative manner.

CHAPTER V

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF A SOCIETY BASED ON THE CAPITALIST SPIRIT

The previous chapter consisted of an enumeration and discussion of certain of the principal positive results accruing to a people living in a capitalist form of society. In the present chapter certain of the more noticeable negative consequences will be discussed.

In an earlier chapter the mutual and supportive relationship between capitalism and Puritanism was brought out, with the proposition put forward that, while Protestantism in its puritannical form was not solely and completely responsible for the rise of capitalism, it was the philosophical and theological leaven which, more than any other single influence, made it possible for capitalism to become the dominant force it is in modern society.

Similarly, while it is not maintained that capitalism is solely responsible for the existence of creative and destructive influences in the society of today, it is claimed that the capitalist spirit is the major influence in giving rise to and supporting these influences. Other factors are involved, to be sure, such as the march of history, moving forward from primitive times and ways to the complex present, and ambiguous human nature with its apparently inerradicable propensity to vacillate between the creative and the destructive. The answer to this statement lies in the fact that, on the one hand, in the march of history the present character of culture has been to a large extent colored by capitalism for good or ill, and, on the other hand, capitalism may be suspected of having a peculiar ability to provide a fertile

soil for the growth of destructive human characteristics. For these reasons, then, this section of the present study will be focussed upon the capitalistic spirit as being primarily responsible for the rise of negative and destructive tendencies in human society.

Another aspect of the discussion concerns the relative ultimacy of the positive and the negative contributions of capitalism. The proposition is here advanced that the negative consequences of capitalism are more fundamental than the positive results.

Support for this assertion is offered from two directions. First, the capitalistic appropriation of the Protestant element of autonomy may be said to be a misappropriation, since autonomy was exalted to the point of becoming an "ultimate", in Paul Tillich's words. "Freedom", "individual initiative", "free enterprise", and other slogans of the orthodox laissez faire economy are caricatures of the Protestant conception of autonomy. In fact one may go so far as to say that, although capitalism and Protestantism have so many elements in common, in this respect they are absolute opposites. For, as capitalism gives autonomy the character of ultimacy, Protestantism refuses to give anything this quality but God, and considers the "assumption of ultimacy by the finite" to be blasphemous and idolatrous.

Autonomy, in Protestantism is not pure, unlimited autonomy in the human realm, but becomes, as Tillich describes it, theonomy. Theonomy is "an autonomy filled with religion"¹, which means that any kind of

¹Paul Tillich, The Interpretation of History, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), p. 24

human or finite autonomy is autonomous in relation to and judged by the ultimacy of God. "Theonomy is the free devotion of finite forms to the eternal."² Protestantism does not consider any existent form or principles as ultimate in themselves, including religious forms, but as cultural or religious expressions of relative truth in relation to ultimate truth.

Theonomy regards the religious ideas and religious forms of life neither to be reduced after the fashion of Liberalism to parts of the system of finite forms, nor as in orthodox fashion as destructive of that system.³

Capitalism does not have this careful relation of the finite to the infinite which is characteristic of the best in Protestantism, and therefore may be said to be a perversion of Protestantism.

The second comment regarding the destructive character of capitalism hinges on the character of the positive and the negative effects of capitalism. The discussion in chapter four enumerated several directions in which the practice of capitalism had brought benefits. A close study of these, however, will show that the weight of the positive results leans to the material and the non-human side. The human or spiritual benefits are present as well, but they are more incidental than the material gains. They may be described as partaking of the quality of residual benefits rather than of primary benefits. On the other hand, as will be shown below in the discussion of the negative consequences of a society based on the capitalist spirit, it

²Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 216.

³Ibid.

is the specifically human or spiritual element of life that suffers the negative consequences, rather than the material element. This would suggest that capitalism as an active force in human society possesses, in the light of human welfare, certain very dangerous qualities.

I. MATERIALISM

The Profit Motive. The expectation of personal gain is the motive for engaging in business enterprises of every kind, as employer, worker, private entrepreneur or professional man, in a capitalist society. This, of course, is a statement so obviously true as hardly to require discussion. Yet, lying as it does at the root of the activity which occupies the major portion of every person's day, it has far-reaching implications. It necessarily becomes the guiding principle of every business undertaking. Although business ethics is given serious consideration by many businessmen, with the concept of service to the public also being taken seriously, a businessman can be neither ethical nor serviceable if his operation is not profitable. He must make a profit to stay in business. Ethics and service may be viewed as refinements of the economic enterprise, desirable theoretically, but necessarily incorporated into the business procedure only when and to the degree feasible. Furthermore, the mechanisms of the free market, on which capitalism relies for economic control, presupposes that each will seek to maximize profits.

The public interest may also be seen as a relative quantity, a variable, introduced into business to such degree as profit allows and as public opinion or a favorable company image demands. Men of business

may have altruistic motives among other motives, but to remain in business the profit motive must take precedence. This factor is also operative in the ranks of labor, who are also in the market, selling time and labor for the highest prices that can be obtained. The most enlightened businessman and the most compassionate laborer are interested in profit and wages first and foremost, and necessarily so. If these cease the owner goes out of business and the worker stops working.

Things as the Standard of Value. Capitalism has been related to money and things - the use of money to buy, sell, make, transport, build, invent or change things. As this traffic has increased during the age of capitalism more and more people have found it possible to deal with more and more things, giving rise to an increasingly higher standard of living in many parts of the world. This higher standard of living is, furthermore, normally reckoned on the basis of wealth and its power to purchase goods. The result is that what has been called a "thing culture" has been developed, in which things become the standard by which life is judged, not only as to quantity but also as to quality. Even man is having to take his place as a thing among the things he has developed, and to be judged on a standard related to things.

He has become a part of the reality he has created, an object among objects, a thing among things, a cog within a universal machine to which he must adapt himself in order not to be smashed by it . . . Out of this predicament of man in the industrial society the experience of emptiness and meaninglessness, of dehumanization and estrangement, have resulted.⁴

⁴Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 46.

Things as a Monopoly of Concern. In addition to the assumption of the criteria of value in a capitalist society, things acquire a virtual monopoly of concern in the thought and activities of men. This is a natural corollary of the fact of their necessarily important place in the on-going activity of the capitalist system of production and distribution. Ordinarily the man who is honored is the man who has contributed most to the advancement of the system, either theoretically or practically. The sense of achievement is normally associated with advancement economically. This orientation tends to develop a one-sided emphasis on the part of citizens of capitalist cultures in two ways.

In the first place, the necessity, felt consciously or unconsciously, of work for economic advancement and the acquisition of material things tends to crowd out other thoughts and activities. Work and the profit motive monopolize people's thoughts and activities, so that an undue amount of time and effort is spent in this connection. Intellectual, aesthetic and social concerns find but little place in the traditional capitalist culture, to the impoverishment of the whole life of man.

In the second place, concentration on the material elements of life and belief in their greater value have the result of devaluating the other, non-material activities. Achievement in the economic realm is applauded and rewarded; achievement in the artistic or aesthetic realm is suspect or unnoticed. Activities resulting in works of beauty or theoretical value, since they are not directly related to the pragmatic test of economic usefulness, are not regarded as worthy of the

concern of realistic people. They are abstract, and hence seen as in some way unreal or irrelevant. The tendency, therefore, is, in a capitalist society, to de-emphasize the cultural and to emphasize the practical.

The Paradox of Value. At the same time, while the materialistic emphasis tends to give things the place of supreme value, the exigencies of the economic situation tend to remove value from things. Under the stimulus of inventiveness, which produces ever newer and better things, and of the necessary expansion of the capitalist enterprise, and of marketing techniques which serve to increase desire, a new element is introduced. This is the element of intrinsic non-value, as related to things. The concepts of disposability and obsolescence tend to remove the value from things-in-themselves and to leave them empty, except as they have some quality of fleeting usefulness in the satisfaction of the desires of men. This has very serious consequences in respect to man's total welfare, as will be seen and discussed in a later section.

Man's Predicament. This line of reasoning, carried to its final analysis, shows that man, in capitalist society, is drawn away from the true elements of manhood, as found in the qualities of mind and spirit, and is drawn inexorably into a situation of worship of the things of this world. At the same time he discovers a hollowness, a falsity in this loyalty to that from which all value has been subtracted in the inexorable process of depersonalization. The picture of man that remains is that of a creature in the captivity of a demonic system

which assumes all value for itself as an ideology, and which abstracts all value from the realities of the mental, the spiritual, the social and the material world. Man is thus left in a vacuum, homeless yet in need of a home, purposeless yet needing purpose. This is man's present predicament. This is the cause of his anxiety as he looks around himself for help in achieving self-integration, restoration of meaning to his life, and a sense of true community with a realistic relationship of his being with God, the Ground of Being.

II. ANONYMITY

Production Lines. One of the contributions of the production lines in addition to their development of mass production of goods, is the influence they have had in the creation of a human mass. The production line, in its progressive refinement over several centuries, represents a great step forward in the production of goods, the efficiency being evident in every aspect of commercial enterprise, such as quantity production, quality control, standardization and marketing. The deleterious effect of this movement is upon man, who must be the "hand" at the machine. By a progressive expansion and refinement of the process of production, man is made more and more remote both from his fellow worker and from the meaning of his work. He becomes a cog in the industrial machinery, the circumstances of which have been discussed at length many times. There is a danger in this, along with the obvious advantages, the danger being twofold. One danger is the loss of the self, which will be discussed below. The other is the threat that this poses to society as a whole with the development of

the mass. "The mechanized mass and its instinctive movements are the terrible, destructive by-products of the demonic element in the capitalist spirit."⁵ Tillich is here referring to the spiritual impoverishment of the masses by enslavement to the machine. "Mass is the social form of that part of society which is bound by natural laws only, which has been robbed of its vital meaning and which has been made subject to finite ends alone."⁶ This situation is actually destructive of an aspect of human personality, and is potentially destructive of society, given the instinctive and volatile quality of the mass, constituting in its threat a problem of large dimension.

The City. The rise of the city in its modern form is directly related to the rise of the concentrations of mass production industry and the need for nerve centers to serve the industrial and commercial entities. The city contributes to anonymity, in contrast to the small town or rural environment. The actual situation as regards anonymity in the city is a matter of record, needing no more than passing mention at this point.

What does need to be noted is the supporting relation which the city holds as part of the total environment of modern man, where anonymity is an increasing tendency. The city is not alone in its support of anonymity, but is in harmony with other elements in the society which are tending to make possible or even necessary the anonymous mass. The city contributes to this condition by providing a

⁵Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 111.

⁶Ibid.

hiding places where one can find seclusion in the midst of the crowd. This fact has two facets, one seeming to meet the desires of many new residents, the other proving to be a source of frustration to them, but in reality both are contributing to the losses of something important in human life.

There are those who intentionally seek the evasion of responsibility which city living makes possible. If one meets the minimum requirements of citizenship, one can with impunity avoid involvement beyond the necessity of earning one's living and seeking the desired pleasures. One can become an island in the midst of a sea of persons, almost completely unrelated to any other person or any form of association. This is a temptation to which many city dwellers succumb.

This sense of isolation can also become a source of frustration to persons seeking a relationship with other people and with the systems of government and human association that obtain in the city. When this is found to be difficult, and in many cases impossible, the sense of loneliness is extremely acute, often leading to an attitude of withdrawal, which then increases the problem.

Power Blocs. Governmental, private and civic affairs in America are largely governed by small groups of people who, in the main, are known to one another, have power, and possess common interests.⁷ C.W.Mills states that the "power elite" form a close group in many

⁷Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1953), pp. 60-80, 105-106.

ways,⁸ and command the dominant institutions of a dominant nation in a world.⁹

That this is so is dependent on the fact of the mass society, with its character of anonymity and irresponsibility, as is brought out by C. Wright Mills, who says that the public does not decide. The decision makers decide from their position of authority. In making a distinction between a "public" and a "mass" Mills lists the following as characteristics of a public:

1. A healthy ratio of givers of opinion to receivers of it.
2. The possibility of answering back, in freedom of opinion.
3. A vital relation between the formation of opinion and its realization in social action.
4. A high degree of institutional authority.¹⁰

Following an evaluation of these criteria in relation to society today he finds that the United States has moved a considerable distance toward the mass society, which means toward totalitarianism. The public has become consumers of information, politics, goods and ideas rather than producers of them. This produces a situation which is the reverse of the ideal of democracy - a situation in which the many who, in theory, govern themselves through the orderly practice of representative democracy are, in reality, governed by the few who hold and exercise control. The workers in industry have become the pawns of the elite, and the people in society have likewise become the docile followers of those who have authority.

⁸C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 279.

⁹Ibid., p. 287.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 520f.

The Elite and the Mass in Tension. Part of the power of the elite derives from the fact of their being persons, in contrast to the anonymous mass. They have a place, they have a "circle", and they move and act with freedom and facility in this context. To quote Mills again, "These people have become a social class, who move in overlapping 'crowds'."¹¹ These people, sure of their place, their privileges and their responsibilities, move with assurance and competency, mastering the segment of society over which they have control. They act and react in a manner that can be characterized as "enlightened self-interest", believing that their superior position and knowledge, which undoubtedly are the result of their superior innate ability, guarantee also the best interests of the governed.

The anonymous people of the mass, on the other hand, take sometimes a fatalistic view of the paternalism of the power elite, and take sometimes a resentful attitude towards the possession and exercise of this power. When the docile reaction is adopted, controversy and violence are avoided, but at the expense of human dignity, and at the risk of sharper violence at a later date.

The masses, while anonymous and inarticulate, are nevertheless aware of the inequities of the situation and desirous of effecting change. It is perceived that a good deal of education and of life conditioning in general has been training towards adjustment, the morality of which is questioned by Tillich:

¹¹Ibid., p. 11.

One must ask whether education for adjustment is not injustice because it prevents the intrinsic claim for independence from ever coming to the surface. One must ask whether adjustment is not a method of overpowering, and therefore essentially injustice. The answer must be that education for adjustment is just in so far as it is a way of giving a form to the individual. It is unjust in so far as it inhibits the individual from creating new forms . . . a large part of the Existential revolt in the creative culture of the last one hundred years is an attempt to provide justice for the individual and to support his intrinsic claim to transcend adjustment by creativity.¹²

There are many indications that, despite the apparent complacency of the masses, there are very definite stirrings of resentment against their manipulation, marked more and more by overt methods of effecting a change in their circumstances. Some of the violence which has erupted in recent times, while carrying the banner of racial justice, are at the same time protests against the futility of anonymity and all that is connoted by that word.

Education. The provision of free education for all American people is a response to the Protestant principle of the value of each individual before God. The availability of theoretically equal education for all is also a response to the capitalist-Protestant concept of the equality of all men. This has been previously noted as one of the positive values of the capitalist democracies, and is truly a great achievement.

In recent years, however, criticism of the educational system has arisen, particularly since Sputnik. The criticism, arising against various aspects of the so-called "Progressive" system, passes

¹²Paul Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 90.

judgment on several aspects of modern education. The application of the findings of child psychology, for instance, tends to make education more permissive and less rigorous than the critics would like. The adoption of new techniques, principles and equipment is not always regarded with favor, since these sometimes tend to make learning automatic rather than conscious. The orientation is toward adjustment to an excessive degree, rather than to the development of an aggressive individualism. Finally, it is claimed that the traditional "Three R's" are being neglected to make way for too many frills and novelties, so that American education programs are not supplying enough in the way of science. The proof of these assertions is that the Soviet Union, which has a Spartan system of education, is said to be drawing ahead in the scientific disciplines. The demand is for a return to the more rigorous system that prevailed in a former day.

But these criticisms can be answered also, while at the same time admitting to some degree of truth in their charges. In the first place, regarding adjustment, which would appear to have been over-emphasized, the critics themselves are proposing more adjustment, although of a different kind. This is adjustment to the demands of the ideology of capitalism, which is frequently expressed in the terms applicable to nationalism. In either case it is the spirit of capitalism which is dictating the terms, that is, capitalism in the sense of pre-occupation with things as the motivating spirit, in both the capitalist democracies and the communist totalitarian societies. To the degree that education is motivated by the necessity of adjustment to the capitalist spirit, to that extent people are being made subjects of a "demonic heteronomy".

Another criticism directed to the critics is less theological. There is the demand that education concentrate more on the sciences, supplying the technical needs of today, to the end that two purposes will be achieved: people will be equipped with the skills to enable them to obtain and hold jobs, and they will be equipped to supply what is seen as the need, particularly in the business and scientific sector. This is practical education, whose effect will be to emphasize knowledge more than the learners, and to further deepen the problems which are being discussed. An educational program focussed around the system which produces the problems of anonymity will perpetuate and aggravate those problems, and is hardly an adequate solution.

What is needed in education is not a narrowing of the field but an enriching of it. A philosophy of education is needed that thinks through the existential situation of modern man, and takes its departure from that point. It will recognize both the presence of, and the necessity of reckoning with, the heteronomic influences, but will not accord them ultimate value. These will be correlated with the superior value of man himself as he stands in his finite autonomy in relation to his Creator. The aim of education will be to overcome the anonymity of man by the autonomy of man.

III. ALIENATION

Natural. Man today suffers from a sense of alienation from the natural world as a consequence of the scientific, technological and urban civilization which he has built for himself. The anxiety suffered on this account is not accounted for simply by the fact that

man lives in a city, nor can it be solved by providing more parks. The problem lies deeper than that.

There is a sense in which man is related to the soil on which he walks and from which he draws his sustenance, that is symbolized by the myth of the Garden of Eden. In this story man is actually formed out of the dust of the ground. He knows that "he is dust and to dust he shall return". It is a fact of life that is fully accepted with all its limitations and with all its opportunities. Man has a place that is his, to which he belongs, and in which he finds security. That place is Mother Earth.

For almost the total span of man's history he has lived in such a way that he has experienced directly and personally the truth of this fact of his existence. Man has walked on the bare earth with his own two feet, or astride the back of a beast; he has tended his flocks and herds, experiencing the vagaries of the elements with them; he has grown his foodstuffs and cultivated them with tools made from materials he has garnered from field, mine and forest; he has expressed himself emotionally, socially and religiously within the context of the calendar; he has seen life arrive, be nourished by the fruitfulness of nature, and return simply to the earth at the end.

All of this is in harmony with the physical nature of man, which is an element of his nature which is always given full recognition in biblical religion. In fact, most religions contain, in some measure, explicit or implicit recognition of man's relation to nature. The myth and ritual of the early fertility religions gave adequate expression to this aspect of life, and in this respect filled a real

need. To a lesser extent both the eastern and the western Catholic rites also gave expression to the sensual nature of man in the richness of their liturgy. With man's divorce from real contact with nature, and with the withdrawal of the sensual element from much of religion, especially noticeable in Protestantism, man becomes separated from that to which he truly belongs.

In modern American life, which is now largely urban, there is a divorce of man and nature, which is productive of a feeling of unreality and anxiety. In this respect man lives a second-hand existence, so that rather than dealing with nature directly he is forced to deal with the products of nature. Man knows, through history, tradition, myth and religion, that there is a special affinity between himself and the natural world, an affinity which men of earlier times have been able to express, to the satisfaction of their needs. In addition to the intellectual knowledge of man's nature and of his former way of realizing that nature, which knowledge would tend to give modern man a sense of frustration, it is a basic and actual fact of life that man still has this quality in his being which needs satisfaction in some real and fundamental way.

Living in a world largely of his own making, with modern aids to living on every hand, man is not satisfied, and necessarily so, because he has a sense of alienation from that to which he truly belongs. He is more able, through the achievements of culture, to experience in a superficial way many aspects of nature through the use of leisure time, through travel, through visual representation, than his forbears were. But this is superficial rather than basic. It does not provide the

sense of identification which his nature needs. Modern man exists in a world to which he does not feel that he truly belongs. He experiences a deep and foreboding sense of existential estrangement.

Personal. Along with the sense of alienation from the soil comes the realization of alienation from persons.

Mechanization and the industrial formation of industrial masses have led to the loss of a living relation to the soil, the homeland, the native tongue, the common life and the spirit of the nation.¹³

As has been noted, one of the developments of a capitalist way of life is the urban society, with its characteristic of anonymity. Allied to anonymity is the sense of alienation, and the loss of community; it exists for the purpose of production and distribution of goods and for the housing of those engaged in these enterprises.

People's lives are fragmented. A man spends his day as a part of disparate groups having little or no relation to each other, and perhaps in widely separated neighborhoods. His life is divided as he travels in different directions to work, to worship, to play, to live. His life is also divided in another way as he is engaged with different people in each of these activities. The result is that he is unable to establish real identity with any place or with any group. He becomes a spiritual and physical commuter, having superficial contact with many people, but real communion with few or none. In the majority of his contacts both he and the other person are motivated by the necessity to buy, sell or accomplish something rather than by the

¹³Tillich, The Religious Situation. p. 120.

desire for personal communion. The "I - It" type of relationship rather than the "I - Thou" relationship (Buber) develops, contributing to the destruction of personality and the sense of alienation.

Spiritual. One of the mixed legacies of the Renaissance, fortified by elements of Protestantism is the self-sufficiency of man - the exaltation of the human. In its philosophic formulation the principle of individual autonomy and the rejection of religious heteronomy has validity, and was essential for the formulation of the Protestant principle. But in its practical application it has resulted in spiritual alienation. The assumption of omniscience, which is implied in this principle, carried within it the seeds of its own destruction as man cuts himself off from the source of his life, from the ground of his being. This is symbolized in the Babel story. It need not carry with it the anthropomorphic connotation of retaliatory action by an offended God, but may perhaps be more properly descriptive of natural result of man's pride.

Neither must the steps leading to alienation from God be considered as being consciously taken with that aim in mind, although that may in some cases be so. It is more properly considered a more subtle and inevitable progression constituting the negative quality accompanying the gradual acquisition of self-autonomy as man seeks to realize his destiny.

This fact of spiritual alienation adds a deeper note to the alienation on the level of persons. It constitutes more than simply an inability to have communication with another person on a human level;

it means that one actually cannot know that the other's existence possesses real validity. As the Great Commandment implies, God must be known to have reality before his creatures can be so known. Man's present state of alienation is alienation both from God and from persons.

This concept of alienation from God adds a deeper note also to the fact of alienation from the world. As man experiences a sense of ontological alienation he necessarily exposes himself to the possibility of experiencing existential alienation. As the concept of value is withdrawn from God, and thence from people, it is finally withdrawn from the world itself. Value is replaced by usefulness. Things lose their ultimate value and become simply useful. This statement is followed by the question, "Useful for what?". The answer is, nothing, because there is no thing that has value.

The end result of this is that man inhabits that which has no value, no meaning, no purpose. He is ultimately isolated, ultimately alienated. This is the condition of many today, whose sense of alienation leads them into existential despair, and loss of selfhood.

IV. LOSS OF THE SELF

External Problems. The loss of selfhood, which is experienced by many under the exigencies of the capitalist enterprise develops from two historic causes. The first is the actual operation of the commercial system under which people of today live. According to Malcolm Boyd, speaking of the communications industry, communicators exploit consumers, who cannot avoid being exploited. They treat people as objects, they manipulate them, they bring them closer together, even

though they have not "closeness", and they develop in them an indiscriminating acceptance of some product or idea.¹⁴ Acting under the necessity of producing a receptive and responsive public opinion those engaged in the advertising, communications and public relations industries seek to manipulate the public by every possible device. Under the operation of the commercial enterprise the criterion of whether a technique is moral or immoral, ethical or unethical, true or false, legal or illegal is the pragmatic one. The domination of the capitalist pattern is so complete that any means that is not openly attacked by the public or the authorities is considered legitimate. People in this situation, as in others previously mentioned, are manipulated, treated as things, without inherent dignity or integrity, and consequently deprived of selfhood.

Exploitation of workers of all levels is often the case, taking many different forms, in some cases subtle, in others crude. Ever-present, however, is the insinuation that any increase in production or profit justifies a corresponding decrease in selfhood. Wylie Sypher questions whether humanism is possible under a system which is destroying the moral self while becoming more efficient in the production of goods.¹⁵

Disposability is also a concept not confined to goods alone, but also extended to man. More and more men are discovering that they

¹⁴Malcolm Boyd, Crisis in Communication, (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1957), pp. 22-35.

¹⁵Wylie Sypher, Loss of the Self, (New York: Random House, 1962), Chapter 1.

are expendable as new techniques make their skills obsolete or superfluous. The factory owner is necessarily concerned about production and profits, so that if he can refine his operation to make it more efficient in this respect he will do so, replacing or eliminating men or machines with equal unconcern. Even highly trained people are aware of their possible superfluity in the process of change and progress, realizing that profits outrank selfhood.

The result of these conditions, if carried to their final conclusions, is a feeling of meaninglessness. The symptoms of mass disintegration which have been outlined lead to this eventual result, as Tillich shows:

By 'mass disintegration' is meant the situation in which the group formations which grew up under feudalism and early capitalism break down and give way to amorphous masses, in which the laws of mass psychology operate. In such a situation the individual differentiations and integrations of groups and personalities are supplanted by identical mass attitudes; special traditions are forgotten; old symbols have become powerless; a meaningful personal life, especially among the mass of industrial workers, has become impossible. Disintegration, in the last analysis, leads to meaninglessness in the economic, as well as in the social and intellectual spheres. The meaninglessness of existence is perhaps the most characteristic phenomenon of the period of late capitalism.¹⁶

In a special way this sense of futility is applicable to modern woman, whose place in modern life is ambiguous. Identity comes through creative work that contributes to the welfare of human community, as the pioneer woman experienced as she worked in a large and noble way. To a large extent modern woman has lost her position of creative

¹⁶Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 223.

responsibility in the home and has not found an equivalent position in society. Women now need to be able to assume their full share of honored work in the total community, that will have more validity than much of the activity that is carried on and which is rooted in the desire to escape from self. Women with no goal, purpose or ambition are committing a kind of suicide.¹⁷

Internal Factors. A helpful discussion of the function of the Romantic movement in the temporary exaltation and ultimate destruction of the self is presented by Wylie Sypher. Sypher's description of the rise of Romanticism as a revolt against the capitalist spirit and the Copernican revolution has validity, as does his recognition of the collapse of this movement in the face of other influences.¹⁸

In a sense, however, Romanticism carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction, elevating, as it did, the autonomous self to a position of ultimacy or absoluteness in an undisciplined and unrelated way. Carried to its logical conclusion Romanticism represents what Tillich would call the domination of a new heteronomy in an attempt to escape from the old heteronomies. In this sense it is unfaithful to the true nature of man, and unable to meet his real needs, which are best described as religious, in the large sense. To say that man's needs are religious is to say that he lives in a state of relation - relation

¹⁷Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, (New York: Norton, 1963), pp. 333-337.

¹⁸Sypher, op. cit., Chapter 2.

to God and relation to man. The inward spiralling drive of Romanticism is unrelated, and leaves man isolated and estranged, not only from others but also from his own essential being. It is in its opposition to such self-centeredness and in its realization of the full nature of man that Christianity is able to meet his needs. "In the loving person to person relationship Christianity manifests its superiority to any other religious tradition."¹⁹

Romanticism, as a phenomenon of the nineteenth century, has run its course, disappearing as a result of its own inadequacy, overcome by the spirit of capitalism, and outdistanced by the fuller understanding of men. There is as yet, however, no adequate philosophy that is accepted by people in general, to take its place. Men have sought autonomy by fleeing from the various heteronomies that arise and threaten their integration, but as one heteronomy is overcome another takes its place. The capitalist society is the dominant ideology that today threatens man's selfhood.

The spiritual disintegration of our day consists in the loss of an ultimate meaning of life by the people of Western civilization. And with the loss of the meaning of life they have lost personality and community. They have become, whether they know it or not, parts of an objective process which determines their lives in every respect, from their economic situation to their spiritual form. The insecurities and the vicissitudes involved in this process have produced feelings of fear, anxiety, loneliness, abandonment, uncertainty and emptiness.²⁰

Man has internalized the domination of the objective process which Tillich refers to, accepting it as his fate, and in so doing losing

¹⁹Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 27.

²⁰Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 262f.

his own center of integration. This is his existential problem.

Self and Culture. In some respects it may be said that the medieval period was a satisfactory period in which to live, from the standpoint of human personality. It is possible to suggest this because of the quality of order that prevailed in the life of the Middle Ages, because of the close relationship between man and the soil, the personal quality of community life, and the sacramental character of the culture, dominated as it was by religion. All of this provides both a horizontal and a vertical dimension to life, in an organic relationship such as has not been the case at other periods of history.

But it was precisely because of this domination of the person by the community and its institutions that there arose a desire to break free. No form of culture, however idyllic, that smothers the self can be called really good in regard to human self-integration. It is true that selfhood can only be achieved in community, but community cannot substitute for the self. In medievalism the community flourished, but the self was denied.

When the pendulum had swung to the other extreme, as in the romantic era, and the shackles of restraint had been thrown off, it was possible for the self to emerge, untrammelled. In this case it was the self that flourished and the community which was denied (although, as noted above this was, in some respects, a false form of the self). Estrangement was, in this case, not overcome, but merely manifested in a new way, for "man's estrangement is not only man's estrangement from

himself, but also from every other man."²¹

In the modern age a new situation has arisen in which neither community, as in the medieval age, nor self, as in the romantic age, has the opportunity to flourish. Both are denied under the heteronomy of the economic system. And in a very real sense, notwithstanding the partial and imperfect achievements of the earlier ages, it is not possible for either real selfhood or real community to exist without the other. "The loss of the person is interdependent with the loss of community. Only personalities can have community."²²

The problem of our time is that a heteronomy more pervasive by far than previous heteronomies has arisen and gripped men in its iron grasp, destroying both self and community, and demanding total allegiance. The life of self and the life of community, both of which depend on the growth and relation of personality, have been subjugated to the inexorable process of the economic enterprise.

(People) have become . . . parts of an objective process which determines their lives in every respect, from their economic situation to their spiritual form. The insecurities and the vicissitudes involved in this process have produced feelings of fear, anxiety, loneliness, abandonment, uncertainty and emptiness.²³

Self and Nature. Sypher, in his discussion of the loss of personality, introduces the concept of entropy, which may be described as "evolution in reverse", quoting Sartre. This term, drawn from the physical sciences, is used to continue the discussion of the

²¹Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 104.

²²Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 264.

²³Ibid., p. 263.

degeneration of human selfhood through medievalism, romanticism and capitalism, to what Sartre calls the "erasure of man".²⁴

In the course of a discussion of the modern trends of illogic in the fields of mathematics, science and philosophy, Sypher finds a relation between the abstraction in these fields and the abstraction or subtraction in art. If this thesis be accepted and placed alongside the thesis of the influence of the "thing-culture" of modern man an interesting pattern begins to emerge, which both illustrates the predicament of modern man, and asks a provocative question as to the solution of his problem.

The concept of the nature of man which is held in the western world is a concept which has many sources, of course. But it may be rather generally described as having primarily a quality of rationalism. This view of the nature of man, peculiar to the western world, arose in the time of the Renaissance and the Reformation, which recalled the strong element of intellectualism in the classical era. As the spirit of the Renaissance released man from the bondage of his times and opened up to him the exciting possibilities of knowledge, and as the spirit of the Reformation released him from the dependence upon an emotional and sensual experience of religion and offered him the possibility of a personal and rational knowledge of God, a new understanding of the self became possible. Man became an individual, a rational individual with the ability on the one hand to enjoy knowledge of God, and on the other to know and exploit nature.

²⁴Sypher, op. cit., pp. 66-80.

But it may now be questioned whether this was an unmitigated gain for humanity. Man was now considered to be a rational being, with the consequent subjugation of the other elements of his personality. That the essential parts of man's complete nature include the sensual and emotive elements is attested by the presence of the corresponding elements in the religion and culture of many of the world's ancient and modern civilizations and religions, including that of the pre-Renaissance Christian era, and of the Bible.

The point to be made is that for several hundred years western civilization has been based on an understanding of man which is but partial, and has stressed this as being the whole of man. The rational has been recognized and nurtured; the natural has been submerged and starved. In the development of this emphasis Puritanism, with its strong quality of rationalism and asceticism, played a significant part, as has been described above. This combination of Greek intellectualism, Renaissance rationalism, and Protestant asceticism, while not being the sole cause, has been strongly influential in creating the climate in which the rise of economic domination, the surrender of personality, and the ultimate loss of self can be possible.

The creations of the artists of today, including those in the writing and philosophic fields, are widely recognized as expressing the predicament of modern man, particularly his estrangement, his alienation and his loss of self.

But at this point, in the course of a discussion of this area of concern, Sypher perceptively asks a trenchant question as he

queries, "Is there arising a New Humanism, which is non-Greek?"²⁵, implying a new foundation. This question bears a close affinity to the question asked by Tillich, "Is there a chance that the Protestant churches . . . will be able to give a principle of reintegration to the present world? . . . It (Protestantism) must seek a new foundation."²⁶

Sypher asks his question as he observes a trend in art away from the rational, as the artist loses himself in his work, as for instance in Dubuffet all becomes lost in a sea of mud, or as in Pollock the vitality of color and line take charge of the painter, or as in others nature is seen "from the inside". In commenting on Sypher's statement that Romantic painting is nature seen through a temperament, one may suggest that modern painting is temperament seen through nature. "In the new science, anti-painting, anti-novel, we find our self by losing our self . . . the self approaches identity in nature."²⁷ These words are strongly suggestive of the words of Jesus, "He that loses his life for my sake will find it"²⁸, which is likewise an anti-rational statement calling for more than intellectual understanding.

Tillich's question likewise shows a gleam of hope as he sees movements in the arts, sciences and philosophy, which he characterizes as the existential revolt, reacting in accordance with the method of correlation upon the traditional character of Protestantism. Tillich

²⁵Sypher, op. cit., pp. 110-115.

²⁶Tillich. The Protestant Era., p. 232.

²⁷Sypher, op. cit., pp. 110-120.

²⁸Matthew 10:39.

reminds us that the "central principle of Protestantism is the doctrine of justification by grace alone,"²⁹ which is a great mystery. But "Protestantism is a highly intellectualized religion . . . but masses that are disintegrated need symbols that are immediately understandable without the mediation of intellect. They need sacred objectives."³⁰

Protestantism, by its central doctrine of justification by grace alone, protests that

No individual and no human group can claim a divine dignity for its moral achievements, for its sacramental power, for its sanctity, or for its doctrine. If, consciously or unconsciously, they make such a claim, Protestantism requires that they be challenged by the prophetic protest, which gives God alone absoluteness and denies every claim of human pride. This protest against itself on the basis of an experience of God's majesty constitutes the Protestant principle.³¹

If the Protestant spirit, working through the churches as well as in secular life, can be brought to a vigorous exercise of the "Protestant principle" of ceaseless criticism of all cultural creations and concepts of man, on the basis of the justification by grace alone, it will make possible the development of a new doctrine of man, and a new, more complete, concept of the self. This is the problem to which the concluding parts of this study will be directed.

²⁹Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 226

³⁰Ibid., p. 227f.

³¹Ibid., p. 226.

V. LOSS OF THE HOLY

Loss of the Sacramental Attitude. The loss of the self is related to the loss of the sacramental attitude in a very real way. The two conditions are mutually interactive, each receiving from and contributing to the development of the other, under the stimulus of the materialistic emphasis of modern times.

In place of the biblical assertion that "God saw all that he had made, and behold it was very good", is put the thoughtless acceptance of the raw materials of nature and the sense of pride in the human manipulation of them. In place of the Psalmist's paeon, sensing and proclaiming that "the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork", is the modern belief that the heavens are a new world to conquer, and that man's present achievements prove his ability to conquer them.

In spite of the progress made in many areas of life, which no one may reasonably deny, it is becoming more and more evident to thoughtful people that there is a deterioration in man's most essential relationship - his relationship to the Holy. As man becomes progressively more self-sufficient he becomes progressively more divorced from what Tillich calls the "ground of his being", or what others might call God.

In the past man's relation to material things was hallowed by reverence and awe, by pity toward and gratitude for his possessions. In the pre-capitalist era there was something transcendent

in man's relation to things . . . (but) in capitalism, things become utility wares . . . produced, treated, and given away without love or a sense of their individuality.³²

"Loss of the Holy" is a condition that characterizes modern culture, in contrast to earlier cultures. What may be called the sacramental attitude was characteristic of societies generally up to and including the medieval, and continues to be a dominant attitude in so-called primitive societies. In the sacramental society nature becomes an avenue to the divine because of the perceived relationship between the physical world and some invisible and mysterious power that is at work in it. The limitations of man in face of the awe-ful cosmic power are recognized, the mysterious cycle of life and death are observed and meditated upon, the place of nature in its support and destruction of life is accepted - all contributing to a feeling of close relation to the finite which in some way points to and participates in the infinite.

In religion this leads to an appreciation of the sacramental value of things. Things, being more than mere things, which are unrelated to any other things or to the source of their being, have a value that is beyond the merely utilitarian. They become symbols that point beyond themselves to the divine. In Tillich's words they do more than merely point - true symbols "participate in" the divine. That is, a finite object which men, imbued with a sense of the Holy, recognize to be a religious symbol, gathers unto itself qualities of relation both to the natural world and to the divine. In this way,

³²Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 107.

to believers it becomes a means of their experiencing a relationship to the divine - to God. "Any object or event is sacred in which the transcendent is perceived to be present. Sacred objects are holy objects laden with divine power."³³

The sacred, or sacramental, object or event used in the service of the human worship of the divine, being laden with divine power, is able to open up to men a vision of the Holy. Thus is faith created, and men are grasped, as Tillich would say of this experience, by the unapproachable holy, which is the ground of being, breaking into existence, both judging and healing.

In contrast to this sacramental attitude which has been the subject of this discussion there has arisen the attitude of materialism, which devalues the spiritual character of nature. Insofar as it is successful it closes this avenue of approach to the Holy.

Protestantism, particularly in its puritannical form, has been partly responsible for the loss of the sacramental attitude and for a consequent diminution in the experience of the Holy. The rational and ascetic character of Protestantism has led to a repudiation of the sensuous, aesthetic, dramatic and symbolic elements in worship to a considerable degree. The exaltation of the Word, as logically and rationally presented, has to a large extent excluded other more irrational elements which are able to speak to people with meaning and power, in ways that are not open to the Word, or in circumstances where the Word would be ineffectual. Protestantism has performed an

³³Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 108.

inestimable service for man in releasing him from the bondage of the magical and the fearful, and from the domination of a human institution elevated to the rank of the absolute. But, on the other hand, Protestantism has, by expressing the extreme reaction from all things Catholic, cut man off from much richness of experience, and has impoverished the religious life of man by casting it in the rigorous mold of intellectualism.

Capitalism, closely allied to Protestantism in many ways, has interpreted the retreat from sacramentalism as a mandate for the exploitation of nature for the material benefit of man. Nature is divested of its sacramental quality and relegated to a position of usability. Man, under capitalism, has learned not to have reverence for nature as a window of the divine, but to manipulate it for his own material and finite use.

Retreat of the Religious Influence. In an earlier and less sophisticated society religion, standing as it did, at the center of life in all its richness, exercised a pervasive influence not only on the attitudes of men but on every aspect of their activity as well. In a pre-scientific, pre-commercial age, religion was the acknowledged arbiter of truth, the center of community, and the dispenser of justice and grace. It occupied a pre-eminent position in society, influential in every aspect of the lives of men.

The rise of rationalism with its accompanying developments in the realms of knowledge, productivity and commerce, set in motion a course of development which is now a matter of history. The church, step by step, retreated from its dominant place, unable or unwilling to

come to grips with the problems involved in its relationship with the world. In spite of what has been said of the validity of the sacramental spirit, as fostered by the church, there was a one-sidedness, an unrealistic spirituality about the church which rendered it irrelevant and helpless in the face of the vitality and aggressiveness of the new capitalism, which no longer needed the support of any religious forces, and which felt the attempts of religion to influence economic life, insofar as they could be felt at all, an unjustified interference. This was so because the spirit of capitalism is a symbol for an ultimate, fundamental attitude. "It is the spirit of a finitude which lives for itself."³⁴

Religion frequently represents utopia, and so literally has "no place" in modern life. For this reason it often has little relevance and exerts little influence. A spiritual religion is no match for a materialistic ideology, so that the religious retreat continues, and man drifts farther away from a true experience of the Holy.

Loss of Basis for the Holy. The church, which was the mediator of the Holy, has been displaced by the factory. The university, child of the church and devoted to the humanities, is being displaced by the brain factory dedicated to the development of the useful skills. The Holy Day has become a holiday. These and other examples can be brought forward to illustrate the fact that the church, dedicated to feeding the whole man, has lost out to the commercial interests and

³⁴Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 27.

philosophies that feed only part of man.

Nature, the symbol of God's goodness and generosity and the expression of his creativity, has been displaced by nature, the supplier of raw materials for productive and commercial use. The basis on which modern life is built, with the maximum of production and consumption being the criteria for success, has caused man to lose that "reverence for life" of which Albert Schweitzer spoke.

Man, the creature of God's love, of whom it is said that "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being," has become man who said, "Come, let us build a tower that will reach into the heavens and let us make a name for ourselves." Man, who belongs symbolically to both earth and spirit is tempted to forsake them both, and become a calculating creature, intent on feeding himself physically while starving himself emotionally and spiritually. In setting in motion the activity of his intellect for the improvement of his lot on earth, which is in essence a positive act in accordance with his destiny, he has created a Frankenstein which threatens to destroy him rather than to exalt him. He finds it increasingly difficult to remember, and to live by, the words which express the truth of his nature: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." He is in need, not of returning to a way of the past, but of what Tillich calls a "Belief-ful Realism", which is

first of all an attitude in which the reference to the transcendent and eternal source of meaning and ground of being is present. This reference has been absent from capitalist society.³⁵

VI. LOSS OF UNITY

Yet another way of looking at the problem of the destructive effect of the capitalistic way of life is in relation to the loss of unity. Life in the pre-capitalist era was definitely more unified than it is under capitalist domination. It is admitted that there is a sense in which too complete a unity is stultifying and repressive, particularly when it is the result of control by an objective and autocratic system, as was the case in pre-Reformation days. It is also recognized that there are virtues in diversity, which make possible the realization of potentialities in a way unrealizable in a more unified society. But it is maintained that the loss of an attitude of unity exercises a destructive force on the integration of personality, for "man is a multidimensional unity, and not a composite of parts . . . all elements of man's being participate in every moral decision and action."³⁶ In modern society man often is served by the varied interests of life as though he were a collection of separate parts, somewhat according to the teachings of the older "faculty" psychology. But "Body, soul and spirit are not three parts of man. They are dimensions of man's being, always within each other; for man is a unity, and not

³⁵Ibid., p. 12.

³⁶Paul Tillich, Morality and Beyond, (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 41.

composed of parts."³⁷

The concept of dimension here mentioned by Tillich appears to be helpful in an analysis of this aspect of the situation. If the idea of the vertical dimension can be used symbolically (remembering Bishop Robinson's reminder that God is not "up there" or "out there") this can suggest the dimension of relationship to the "ground of our being" - the basic, ontological relationship to the Absolute, to God. The horizontal dimension can then describe the relationship of man to all things finite, including that of man to man. Then the dominance of one or the other of these dimensions or their degree of unity will be useful in the study of the loss of unity.

Dominance of the Vertical Dimension. In the medieval era the dominant orientation of man was to the vertical dimension, which was mediated through the church. The common ventures of life, as they affected the individual, were always experienced under the aegis of the church, representing the Absolute. Such events as birth, baptism, marriage, death, and the ceremonies attendant upon them were always hallowed by the religious and symbolic acts relating the people and the events to God and his love.

Similarly, the services which were performed on behalf of man, although taking on the character of the horizontal, were nevertheless motivated by the dimension of the vertical. The care and nurture of man in his various aspects were undertaken with the knowledge that he

³⁷Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, (New York: Harper & Bros.: 1957), p. 106.

was a child of God, and for that reason was worthy of love and care. Man was concerned for himself as an individual, and also concerned for his neighbor, because he saw both himself and his neighbor related to the love of God in a way best characterized by the word "agape".

The so called 'types of love' are actually 'qualities of love', lying within each other and driven into conflict only in their distorted forms. No love is real without a union of eros and agape.³⁸

The cultivation of man's mind was undertaken in the spirit of this union of love, that man might better know God and his fellow man, thus being enabled to live more completely in the spirit of the vertical dimension as it was understood.

The care of man's body as the temple of God was considered a religious obligation by the individual under ordinary circumstances, and, in complementary relation, was considered the obligation of the church where special care was needed.

The care and cure of souls was of course the prerogative of the church, and was considered to be the central concern both of organized religion and of the individual, the soul being most directly related to the vertical dimension of life.

In all other activities of a personal and communal nature, such as festivals, war, initiation of commercial enterprises, community functions or politics, the blessing of God was sought and His guidance desired. No matter how much any activity partook of the dimension of the horizontal it was always conceived and carried out in relation to

³⁸Ibid., pp. 114f.

the dimension of the vertical.

This, in what has been called "the Age of Faith", contributed to a strong sense of unity. The individual experienced this unity, as his various concerns and activities in the world were always meaningfully related to the divine purpose as expressed through him. He experienced in this way a sense of integrity that is difficult for men to experience today because of the lack of the direct vertical relationship.

He also experienced a sense of unity with his fellows who, likewise, were expressing in their lives what they consciously believed was the will of God, and who saw a direct relationship between their works and their faith. Each knew himself and his brother to be a child of God, created by love, and for service in the name of God.

Although today it can be seen that, carried to the extreme, this form of society in its actual manifestations threatened true individuality, it must also be recognized that it released man from the domination of self and placed him in the care of God. This provided the opportunity for true religious and psychological healing, as man was delivered from the varied and conflicting interests and desires of life, each of which claimed ultimacy, into a realization that God alone was ultimate and that all other concerns were relative. Tillich recognizes the validity of this orientation in a discussion of modern aids to personal integration as he says,

Only a priestly man can be a complete psychiatrist. For with him the relation to the patient and the inner activities of the patient have been lifted out of the realm of the subjectivity of the finite into the inclusive life of the eternal.³⁹

The central, fundamental attitude of man is his religious attitude; hence the healing art must cease to be either merely parallel to or opposed to religion.⁴⁰

In the age of faith not only the healing art but all other arts and affairs of life were not "merely parallel to or opposed to religion", but were based on a relationship to something ultimate, to the eternal. This is what made possible the high degree of personal and social sense of unity, or integration.

Dominance of the Horizontal Dimension. With the exception of the spirit of capitalism and the declension of the spirit of religion following the medieval period in western civilization came a corresponding re-orientation of man to the dimensions of his being. The religious or vertical dimension declined in importance as a motivating power while the secular or horizontal dimension increased in influence. The emphasis, under the stimulus of the spirit of capitalism, gradually became more worldly in contrast to the more spiritual relation of the previous eras, and also became more individualistic and competitive in comparison with earlier times.

The materialistic emphasis characteristic of the capitalist form of society has little affinity with the vertical dimension as a guideline for life, but very great kinship with the horizontal dimension, dealing, as it does, with things, and dealing with them not as they

³⁹Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 140.

⁴⁰Ibid., P. 141.

express the creativity of God but as things to be used for the pleasure of man. This aspect of materialism is easily recognized, and its hazards appreciated without argument, but there is another, more insidious danger in materialism that is pertinent to the discussion of the loss of unity. As Tillich points out,

Mechanization and the industrial formation of industrial masses have led to the loss of living relation to the soil, the homeland, the native tongue, the common life and the spirit of a nation.⁴¹

Without the living relation to the vertical dimension, which capitalism repudiates despite its genetic relationship with Protestantism, there develops fragmentation. The things that are dealt with under the capitalist system of production and commerce - and these include raw materials, products exchange, accounts, transportation and even "hands" - bear no intrinsic relation to one another or to anything beyond them. They are related only, as they must be by practical necessity, to facilitate the operation of the system. Otherwise they are disparate elements, unrelated in any real or meaningful way. As this concerns the realm of matter in itself it is unimportant, but as it concerns man in his relationship to this world of matter and to society it is ultimately important. It is important because it acts as an agent in developing the characteristics of unrelatedness, callousness, unconcern, irreverence, self-centeredness, ultimately destroying the sense of inner unity, human brotherhood and religious faith. Tillich draws upon the insights of psychologist Erich Fromm in speaking to this point: "Erich Fromm has fully expressed the idea that the right

⁴¹Ibid., p. 120.

self-love and the right love of others are interdependent, and that selfishness and the abuse of others are equally interdependent."⁴²

This destructive course is abetted by the temptations, sometimes subtle and sometimes crude, to exploit the capitalist way, accumulating material goods, not for need but for power. In the ensuing struggle for the possession which means power, and for the power which promotes possession, man is set against man. There is competition for jobs, competition among businessmen for goods and markets, competition between management and labor for power, competition between industry and industry for dominance, and between nation and nation for world prestige. Man, in every case, is set against man, and the sense of unity is destroyed. Such alliances as are made have as their basis prudential reasons, and are made with the hope of making a more united and massive attack upon some opposing group.

These trends in the capitalist system have, in the past, been so gradual that the effects have been incorporated into society easily and without ostentation. The net change in any one generation has been so slight that the deterioration in personal integration and in human relations has gone almost unnoticed. But the effects, nevertheless, have been deleterious and cumulative, to the point where they are now noticeable and have become causes for concern. In addition to this the situation has been so greatly aggravated in recent years by the massive breakthroughs in science and technology that the danger to

⁴²Paul Tillich, The Courage to Be, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 22.

selfhood and community is obvious. Each intellectual advance carries a potentiality for good and for evil. When these advances occur in the milieu of a society so charged with destructive potentialities, tremendously dangerous possibilities are unleashed.

The breakthroughs in knowledge just referred to, while constituting a boon to the race in the unending search for understanding, have themselves brought about a problem. Given the well nigh universal orientation to the materialistic expression of the capitalist spirit it was inevitable that the "practical" disciplines would receive the major attention. As a result science, both pure and applied, has made fantastically rapid gains in recent years. In fact it is estimated that eighty per cent of all the scientists who have ever lived are alive in the year 1965.⁴³ This startling breakthrough has so stimulated the productive and economic machinery that new visions of even greater economic activity have led to the active encouragement and support of further scientific and technological research. In this way science and industry are mutually supportive. To this is also added the stimulation of government sponsored programs of research as implicitly or explicitly part of an international form of peaceful or warlike competition.

This knowledge explosion, while inevitable and essentially good, has results that must not go unnoticed. One of these is the extensive and often detailed compartmentalization of knowledge, with the consequent isolation of fields of knowledge from one another, and of

⁴³George J. Warheit, Acting on Mission, (Philadelphia: Stewardship Council of the United Church of Christ, 1965), p. 6.

all of them from the public. This constitutes another element in the loss of unity. Far from the old dictum that "knowledge is one" is the modern realization that knowledge is polysynthetic, at least in its manifestations, and that instead of unifying people it separates them.

Another result of the knowledge explosion is the phenomenon of the cultural lag. Under the impetus of the economic stimulus and the war effort the disciplines of science and technology have surged ahead, while the humanities have lagged behind. This, too, has the effect of dissolving the essential unity that is assumed to exist as the ground of all knowledge, as it is believed possible to extend the horizontal dimension of knowledge disproportionately without correspondingly weakening the vertical dimension or endangering the sense of unity in mankind. The material welfare of man is being ever more efficiently served, while his spiritual welfare is being neglected, under the demands of the capitalist spirit. Knowledge, conceived as technical expertise, supersedes knowledge conceived as wisdom.

In summary, it may be said that the loss of unity is an actual and serious phenomenon in the modern human situation. One of the destructive results of the spirit of capitalism is a form of schizophrenia which expresses itself in various ways.

There is, for instance, the unrealistic division of man into the categories of body, mind and spirit, with the false belief that any of these may be nurtured or ignored without regard to the others and without danger to the whole.

There is, again, the artificial division of life into the religious and the secular, forgetting that, in the words of Tillich,

"Religion is the substance of culture; culture is the form of religion,"⁴⁴ or, putting it another way, "Religion is the dimension of depth in all of the (ethical, cognitive, aesthetic, imaginative) functions; religion is the aspect of depth in the totality of the human spirit."⁴⁵

There is, finally, the false and unbiblical separation of the physical and the spiritual - the dichotomy of the two worlds in which man is known to experience being and existence. As a reaction from an idealistic belief that the really real is to be found only in the spiritual, there is the belief that the really real is to be found only in the physical. Man is split. His unity is destroyed.

The end result of all these influences is that modern man is in a state of disintegration, individually and socially, mentally and spiritually. He is drawn in many different directions, and is without a single focal point. His unity is lost.

VII. OBLIGATORY ESCALATION

The Theoretical Obligation. There is, as has been seen, an inherent incentive in the Puritan spirit to work hard and to be frugal, and therefore to accumulate wealth, even though in principle the Puritans were suspicious of wealth itself. The Puritan spirit, which, as was earlier noted, has affinities with the spirit of capitalism, paved the way, with its doctrines of hard work, frugality and rationalism, for the later spirit of acquisitiveness which is such a marked

⁴⁴Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 42.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 7.

characteristic of later capitalism.

This peculiarly religious incentive carried with it the connotation that a man who was faithful in his Christian stewardship would be a man of some property. Therefore, despite the hesitancy to regard wealth with favor, there was the tendency to regard the man of wealth as a righteous man who had been faithful in his calling. Since it is a natural desire to be well regarded by one's peers, there arose early in the capitalist era the feeling of necessity in regard to the acquisition of wealth. Honor was, and still is, accorded the man of wealth on the supposition that he who has been a good steward in one respect will be a good steward in other respects. So, with means came public recognition and honor, and the opportunity for public service, providing still another incentive for the accumulation of riches. In these ways men are prevailed upon to escalate their activity in the production, distribution, consumption and accumulation of goods.

The Practical Obligation. Capitalism is identical with the pursuit of profit, and forever renewed profit, by means of a continuous, rationalistic, capitalistic enterprise. It must be so. In a wholly capitalistic order of society an independent capitalist entrepreneur who did not take advantage of his opportunities for profit would be doomed to extinction. There is a compulsion, that lies beyond the matter of choice, to maintain a continuous growth in any capitalist enterprise and in a capitalist society in general. This is well understood, and from the point of view of the entrepreneur may be seen in three ways:

1. Production must increase continuously for the reason that the cost per unit decreases with volume, both in regard to labor and raw materials. This makes it possible to lower the profit margin per unit, thus increasing sales and eventual total profit.

2. Profits must increase, not in rate per unit, but in total amount to provide resources for research, expansion, advertising, amortization and other requirements of business. Increase, in every aspect of commercial activity, is a recognized fact which must be taken into account in the planning and operation of any business concern.

3. Sales must increase. Incentives must be provided to encourage more customers to purchase more goods. Merchandising skills must be developed and put into effect. Progressively more time, effort and capital must be directed into this aspect of business to insure that the increased production has purpose and greater profits have reality. The modern businessman may not rest on his oars, expecting his business to continue in a satisfactory way, given his present product, prices and public. He must be sufficiently realistic to recognize that his business will not continue as it is; it will either increase or decrease depending on his alertness and aggressiveness. He is a victim of obligatory escalation.

The consumer, likewise, is a captive of this process, for, in order for production and sales to increase, consumption must also increase. Consequently, by the operation of the implicit and explicit coercion of the obvious and the hidden persuaders, and by the latent desires that are awakened in the affluent society, the consumer buys

an ever-increasing volume of goods for his private and public use.

In addition to goods, the availability of and the desire for services grows with increasing rapidity. Goods and services that were formerly unavailable become luxuries, then quickly become necessities, by the operation of many psychological, sociological and economic forces.

Modern man is filled with new experiences of ownership, of use, of desire, of envy, of frustration and often of satiety, as a result of the pressure to acquire, to consume and to use. This is an unavoidable aspect of the capitalist society, and one which puts a dangerous pressure upon its members. The consumer, too, is a victim of obligatory escalation.

The result of the operation of the inexorable escalation described above is that man is inextricably caught in the operation of a machine which, in the fundamental sense, he no longer controls, but which controls him and determines his fate.

Man's abilities and strength are strained to the breaking point in the various aspects of the productive and consumptive activities involved in the operation of the capitalist society. He is not now really free to make his own decisions based on the consideration of his own welfare as a person, but is conditioned by many forces to make his decisions on the basis of the welfare of the economic society.

Man's energies are also largely directed to the maintenance and growth of the capitalist society. As more and more in the way of gadgets, appliances, recreational facilities and equipment, and things in general are provided, man is captivated by them, acquires them, and

uses them. In spite of the long term trend to shorter working hours modern man is kept busy using his leisure in the services of the things he has created. Much of this activity is non-productive in the sense of creating wholeness of personality; in fact it tends to be destructive of real selfhood as it encourages a frantic pre-occupation with superficial, often meaningless activity, and with the manipulation of things. Things are used in an unsacramental way, on the one hand, but in a rather insidious way, man is also used by things.

The distortion of the relationship between personality and thing appears not only in the subjection of things to personality, but also in the subjection of personality to things.⁴⁶

Man's standards, then, as a consequence of this "thing culture", are powerfully influenced by the standards of the system which dominates. Standards in all forms of aesthetics are depressingly low because man is not allowed, by the exigencies of the economic system, to become a real person and to participate in the realities of nature, to become an artistic soul and experience the message of art, to become a person in relation to person, able to enjoy the creative interaction of community, or to become a spiritual person and live in a situation of relationship with God. All these are being driven out of man's experience by the obligatory escalation of the thing culture which is characteristic of capitalism. The real man is being starved, the counterfeit man is being surfeited.

⁴⁶Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 123.

VIII. REVOLT

The study of some of the effects of capitalism, as followed in this and the previous chapter, have pointed up the fact that capitalism is not an unalloyed blessing. The positive and creative results of the capitalistic way of life have been astounding, doing more to elevate man than any other secular movement in history. And yet, on the other hand, it is possible that the corrosive and erosive influences of capitalism may, in the long run, prove to be more powerful and pervasive than the beneficial influences. This paper is written from the point of view that this is not only possible but highly probable.

One of the early warnings of the dangers of capitalism was of course given by Karl Marx. Now, while it must be agreed that much of Marx is now known to be invalid and outdated, it is also recognized that much of his thinking has validity, and has made definite contributions to religious thinking of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. The theology of today is indebted to Marx in the development of existential thinking and the use of the dialectical method. The main reason, however, for an appreciation of Marx is his "insight into the contradictions in the structure of capitalism . . . this insight has been deepened and confirmed by the catastrophes of the present world."⁴⁷

Man, living under the strain of these contradictions, and more especially under the shadow of the personality-destroying forces of

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 259.

capitalism as they increase in intensity and extensity, develops what might be called (to borrow a term of Tillich's) "ontic" anxiety. This kind of anxiety, as described by existentialism, is not related to particular concerns of the world, but is "the state in which a being is aware of its possible non-being . . . the existential awareness of non-being . . . anxiety is finitude, experienced as one's own finitude . . . (it) has no object, or rather, in a paradoxical phrase, its object is the negation of every object . . . anxiety in its nakedness is always the anxiety of ultimate non-being."⁴⁸

Using another means of expression, Tillich, in a discussion of the relation of courage to anxiety, holds that, "at the end of ancient civilization ontic anxiety is predominant, at the end of the Middle Ages moral anxiety, and at the end of the modern period spiritual anxiety. But in spite of the predominance of one type the others are also present and effective."⁴⁹

Specific words notwithstanding, the observation of many theologians, philosophers, writers, artists and psychologists is that man is suffering from a spiritual malaise, a vague, undefinable anxiety conditioned by his apparent helplessness in the struggle against meaninglessness and destruction. In contrast to human destiny, which is a concept of meaning and hope, he is gripped the fear of fate, in the Greek sense of ultimate and utter tragedy - loss of being.

The tragic character of this situation is heightened by the fact that this generation is caught in a situation of mental and spiritual

⁴⁸Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 35-38.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 57.

debasement which has no ultimate necessity, but which is brought about by what Tillich calls "contingency". "Contingency does not mean causally undetermined but it means that the determining causes of our existence have no ultimate necessity."⁵⁰ This gives our existential situation the quality of fate. The agony of the contemplation of possible non-being is the more exquisite as it is seen not as the will of God, but as the rule of fate. This is the situation of modern man, whose anxiety is not simply related to sickness and health, hunger or satisfaction, war or peace or other such concerns, but is related to the power of fate over his very being.

Fate is a matter of anxiety not because of its causal necessity, but because of "the lack of ultimate necessity, the irrationality, the impenetrable darkness of fate."⁵¹ That which man can understand, even though imperfectly, or for which he can see ultimate causation, can be accepted, if not with equanimity, then at least with compliance; but that which threatens out of the impenetrable darkness which is the characteristic of fate, brings with it the threat of ultimate destruction. The awareness of this threat characterizes the existential situation of modern man.

"Modern civilization is not only on trial but it has been judged and found wanting."⁵² Tillich wrote these words in 1932, after the breakdown seen in the first World War and the subsequent rise of Adolf Hitler. His statement would seem to have been born out by world history

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 44.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 45.

⁵²Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 9.

since that time. Capitalism has suffered a number of shocks of an external type both on the international scene and in the internal affairs of nations, which have served to point up the internal contradictions of the prevailing economic system. In addition there have been progressive modifications of the capitalist system in many nations which have served to modify some of the more blatant injustices which have prevailed.

But neither the shocks nor the modifications have constituted a change in the fundamental orientation of the capitalist society, which constitutes the real problem. An internal revolt, less obvious and explicit than the external shocks, but more pervasive, and in the long run sure to be more effective, is now developing. "The self-sufficient this-worldliness of capitalist culture and religion is being disturbed,"⁵³ as men feel their anxiety giving way to despair when they contemplate the approach of meaninglessness. Meaninglessness, in this context, is used in accordance with the definition given to it by Tillich: "We use the term meaninglessness for the absolute threat of nonbeing to spiritual self-affirmation."⁵⁴ Despair, it is true, is not an invention of the twentieth century. It was known to the Greeks, to Job, to Paul and to innumerable other people in other times and places. Men have always had to live with a sense of anxiety which at times verged on despair. But until now despair has never had the ultimately spiritual significance that it now possesses and which makes it infinite. The heaviness of this burden is thus described:

⁵³Ibid., pp. 51f.

⁵⁴Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 47.

Guilt and condemnation are qualitatively, not quantitatively, infinite. They have an infinite weight, and cannot be removed by a finite act of ontic self-negation. This makes despair desperate, that is, inescapable. There is 'No Exit' from it (Sartre).⁵⁵

If all human life can be interpreted as a continuous attempt to avoid despair, it may be said that the attempt is mostly successful, as Tillich notes.⁵⁶ Extreme situations are not always reached, and not ever reached at all by most people. But the possibility and the existence of such situations as experienced by some, point up the need for the recognition of them. In addition, although not necessarily realized by most, more and more people are reacting to the subconscious presence of such anxiety in themselves, such reacting showing itself in various forms of retreat, negativism and revolt.

The revolt is, as always, a revolt against what Tillich would call some form of heteronomy, domination by some finite principality or power which has been elevated to ultimacy. Man has moved from one such form to another during the last one thousand years. These have been, to recapitulate quickly, the heteronomy of religion in the Middle Ages, the heteronomy of the undisciplined self in the Romantic era, and the present heteronomy of the capitalist society. It is the nature of man to revolt, if he does not give way to utter despair; and revolt, if it is motivated by man's religious sense in the large meaning of the word, may offer a way of salvation.

"What we are witnessing and participating in is not the decline of the West but a revolt against the spirit of capitalist society",

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 56.

⁵⁶Ibid.

says H. Richard Niebuhr in interpreting a writing of Tillich's.⁵⁷

The religious autonomy which is implied in the Protestant principle, and the cultural autonomy which is implied in the humanist principle, are continually threatened by the self-estrangement of human nature. This is the great theme of the Existentialists. They ask a question and insist that this question is asked profoundly. It is the old question of the human predicament, man's finitude and self-estrangement, his anxiety and despair. They revolt against the increasing transformation of man into a thing . . . They react against the education of adjustment which tries to press everyone into a pattern by exposing him day and night to centrally directed means of communication. Although in anti-religious, atheistic, often cynical, often despairing terms, they represent an ultimate religious concern; they see the truth about the human predicament universally and in every particular situation.⁵⁸

Tillich can be quoted yet again in regard to an expression of this revolt:

The revolt against the spirit of capitalist society has been least ambiguously expressed in painting since the beginning of the century. The tendency which we have been accustomed to call expressionism, but which far transcends the narrow meaning of that term, is particularly symptomatic of that fact.⁵⁹

Modern art as a symbol of revolt is not easy to appreciate or to understand for the layman who does not know art as prophetic or revelatory, but who knows it as representational or aesthetic. But much of modern art is revelation and prophecy.

The creators of modern art have been able to see the meaninglessness of our existence; they have participated in its despair. At the same time they have had the courage to face it and to express it in their pictures and sculptures. They had the courage to be as themselves.⁶⁰

⁵⁷Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 10.

⁵⁸Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 186.

⁵⁹Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 86.

⁶⁰Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 147f.

Music in its modern forms, both serious and popular, is likewise symbolic of a revolt against the old forms and of exploration of the new. The revolt is expressed as the predicament of modern man as mirrored in the complexity of rhythm and harmony, the polytonality and atonality of key, the stridency and harshness of dynamics, and the angularity of melody. To this may be added, in vocal and choral works, the existentialist character of many of the texts. The exploration of the new is reflected in the many forms of experimentation in every form and in every aspect of music, including the electronic and self-composing computer music.

Literature also reflects this theme of revolt. Finding its base in the thought of the philosophers Heidegger, Jaspers and Nietzsche, aided by the psychological insights of Freud, stimulated by Ibsen, Dostoevsky and a re-study of Shakespeare, and reaching into the modern period of Sartre, Joyce, Camus, Faulkner and others, the dominating theme of modern literature is found to be that of anxiety, despair, doubt and rebellion.

None of this - art, music or literature - is pleasant or entertaining, and it often elicits a response, in reaction, of frustration, anger or disgust. But in experiencing modern works in these fields one needs to remember that often the artist, musician or writer is "a voice crying", saying not what he would like to say but what he thinks he must say to and about modern man. Not the least of the contributions of modern art and criticism has been their profound portrayal of the state of man today. It behooves the layman to take note of the warnings of these often more sensitive souls.

In considering all these forms of revolt it must be remembered that to a very large degree the revolt is against the dehumanization and disintegration of man, which has developed as a result of the operation of the capitalist spirit which, in turn, has had the tacit support of religion. So the spirit of revolt in the twentieth century may be said to have arisen out of, and directed against, the bourgeois character of the modern Christian capitalist democracy. The evils, present and potential, which this kind of society brings are felt to be greater than the benefits that accrue.

This is especially true in the social forms of the revolt, such as the rebellion of youth, which takes many and various forms in different parts of the world. The youth in rebellion must not be dismissed as simply foolishly exuberant, or as wilfully malicious, which attitude would be to fail to recognize the valid elements in the protest. This is also the case in regard to the many-faceted revolution in civil rights. Excesses no doubt take place, but there is a substratum of validity which, in the last analysis, gives rise to the revolt. The evils of unfreedom, inequality and injustice in respect to the children of God are evils which must be recognized and dealt with on the basis of the worth of human personality before God. The third of the areas of social revolt is that of the rise of new nations. In this case both the capitalist society and the religious enterprise have unwittingly contributed to the situation confronting the world today, in both a negative and a positive way. The fact to be recognized is that the western world is now confronted by a coterie of new nations - including mainland China and the Soviet Union - who are

contesting the right of the historic nations of the West to continue to maintain their position of dominance over the rest of the world. This is a matter of concern for the state, the church, the community and the individual man.

Belatedly, the revolt is also being expressed within the religious community, partly defensively and partly prophetically as the churches have begun to understand their prophetic role in the world. In the Protestant churches of Europe and America, and to a degree also in the Roman Catholic churches the "Protestant principle", as Tillich describes it, has begun to awaken and to give direction.

It is beginning to be recognized that the problem of modern man is ultimately religious, and that only a religious approach of a radically prophetic character can, in the first place, truly present the existential problem, and, in the second place, truly proclaim the essential truth with which it must be correlated.

The following chapter will present an analysis of the "Protestant principle" in an attempt to prepare for an application of this principle to the Christian churches, looking forward toward a renewal of the church and its mission, and hence a more religiously oriented society.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE PROTESTANT PRINCIPLE

It has been the intent of this paper in the preceding chapters to develop the thesis that western democratic civilization during the modern era has evolved under the impetus of the spirit of capitalism. This growth has not been in opposition to certain theological trends found in the Puritan wing of Protestantism, but has been assisted to a degree by the elements of rationalism, asceticism, and transcendentalism which are mingled in that tradition. The situation today is that the dominating power in the society of the West is the spirit of capitalism, to which all other interests, including nationalism and religion, are subservient.

That this form of social and economic organization has brought with it distinct advantages, not only in the specifically economic or material realm, but also in the moral and intellectual aspect of life has also been acknowledged. The benefits of the capitalist way have accrued not only to those who have lived in the capitalist democracies but also in an indirect way to people of other parts of the world.

It has been demonstrated that, accompanying the positive benefits of capitalism there are also very definite negative results. It is further contended that, in the course of human history, the negative results may be found to outweigh the positive results of life in a capitalist society. The seriousness of the negative aspect lies in the fact that the destructive forces are directed not primarily to the physical and material in life, but to the spiritual. Paramount to the

consideration here is the potential destruction of human personality. That this is an unavoidable consequence of the capitalist way, to an as yet undetermined degree, has been stressed in the previous chapter.

Due to the structure of capitalist society, its philosophy, and its necessary modes of operation, capitalism is unable of itself to effect a change in this destructive quality. Capitalism, being one of the chief causes of the problem cannot be also the cure.

The cure must come from another source. The sickness is an ideological sickness; the cure must be a spiritual one. Moreover, this spiritually curative agent must be mediated by that which is existent within the situation. This means that the church, which has ties with both the infinite and the finite, the ultimate and the conditioned, the absolute and the relative, with being and existence, stands at the threshold of the greatest opportunity of its existence as a saving and creative force.

It will be the purpose of the remaining portion of this study to develop the theme that the "Protestant principle", as defined by Tillich, functioning according to the "method of correlation", also as defined by Tillich, provides a key for the redemption of man from the disintegrating effects of the capitalist culture. This will involve an examination of this Protestant principle, followed by an application of it to the churches in their existential situation. The goal of religion, of course, is the salvation of man. The hope for this study is that one approach to this end may be made through the renewal of the church.

I. DEFINITIONS OF THE PROTESTANT PRINCIPLE

What is being studied at this point is the Protestant principle as it is essentially, and not the forms in which it is made manifest in and through the churches. Taking as his point of departure the Protestant Reformation, Tillich rephrases the traditional slogan of Luther, "justification by faith", giving it an even more arresting form, but not doing violence to Luther's concept of the struggle of love and law. Using the word "grace" rather than the word "faith", Tillich says, "The central principle of Protestantism is the doctrine of justification by grace alone."¹ By the use of this term the real meaning of the Protestant principle is safeguarded as it removes the possibility of the misconception of faith itself being an act of man. Tillich is true to Luther in maintaining that God is the initiator of faith through the exercise of his divine agape in the form of grace. "Faith is the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, and God is the name and content of the concern."²

As this is stated it represents the ideal, the essential and original principle of Protestantism, and not the partial and ambiguous forms of Protestantism which exist. True Protestantism, by the exigencies of the existential situation, and by its embodiment in human institutions, becomes distorted. What Tillich seeks in his theoretical

¹Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 226.

²Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 40.

writings, and what this study seeks to be instrumental in activating in a practical way, is the spiritual element of Protestantism, in contrast to the existing forms of Protestantism.

Protestantism . . . must decide for the Protestant principle as against historic Protestantism . . . the demand should be that Protestantism subject all its decisions and activities to the criterion of the Protestant principle in the face of the disturbing reality of the Protestant situation.³

Tillich's use of this term, "Protestant principle", sometimes leads to misunderstanding, particularly as he sometimes uses it in a rather wide sense, as descriptive of believing and acting not only within but also beyond Protestantism, and within the Catholic heritage, or even in the non-Christian culture. The term, as used in his earlier writings, can be almost equated with the operation of the spirit of Christ, or with essential Christianity. In fact, in his later writings, as in Christianity and the Encounter with World Religions,⁴ the latter term is used almost exclusively. This perhaps provides a clue as to the meaning of the term.

The "new creation" or the "new reality" is a concept fundamental to Tillich's system of theology. The source of this is, of course, Paul's declaration that, "If any one is in Christ, he is a new creation."⁵ Paul goes on to say:

³Tillich, The Protestant Era, pp. 180f.

⁴Paul Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963).

⁵II Corinthians 5:17

The old has passed away, behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.⁶

These passages set forth the cardinal principle of Christianity, which makes love the watchword, rather than law. The word of the apostle is that God, through Christ, reconciled us to himself, by the power of pure love. Tillich sees love as creative, dynamic, the expression of the living God, and he sees the law as the embodiment of finiteness, imperfection and ultimate destruction. It is to divine Being expressed as love that everything finite must find relation. This is what Christianity heralds, in that

Christianity is the message of a New Reality which makes the fulfillment of our essential being possible. Such being transcends all special prohibitions and commands by one law which is not law, namely love.⁷

Tillich also expresses this same thought in more philosophical terms, but with the same import, as he says,

The New Being . . . is the Divine Being. But the Divine Being is not a being beside others. It is the power of being conquering non-being. It is eternity conquering temporality. It is grace conquering sin.⁸

The phrase "grace conquering sin" may be abstracted from the above passage as pointing to the kernel of Tillich's belief. Grace conquering sin may be said to symbolize the polarity of love and law, with love superior to law in all works of redemptivity and creativity. Grace conquering sin may be said to symbolize the polarity of God's

⁶II Corinthians 5:17b-19.

⁷Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 211.

⁸Ibid., p. 213.

ways and man's ways, with God's ways superior to man's ways in their directness and immediacy. Grace conquering sin may be said to symbolize the polarity of the Absolute to the conditioned, with the Absolute transcending the conditioned in every respect. Grace conquering sin may be said to symbolize the polarity of truth and falsity, with truth being one and rooted in love, superior to falsity, which is disunity and rooted in pride. In each case the first of the polarities represents God's agape, expressed through Christ, as contrasted with the "principalities and powers" that contend against him.⁹

Properly speaking, it is not the character or spirit of Christianity itself which can be called the Protestant principle, but rather the attitude that is taken or adopted in respect to that spirit and in relation to existence. Love, in its agape quality, is formless and unstructured, but always creative and redemptive. But in its manifestation in religious and other institutions it is expressed in a form, a structure. This is necessarily so, because it is only in the word, the act, the symbol, the tradition, the institution, that the essential spirit can become existent. But the purity, the truth and the essential reality of love is inevitably lost to some degree with every manifestation and with every involvement.

The Protestant principle represents an attitude of continual reference to the ideal, the perfect and the complete manifestation of the love of God through Jesus the Christ as this bears a relationship to all the affairs of men, and as in the exercise of this attitude of

⁹Ephesians 6:12.

reference it continually subjects all human efforts to the judgment of the perfect which is the norm. Using Tillich's more formalized language,

Original Protestantism was the sharpest protest it is possible to think of against the spirit of self-sufficient finitude in its ecclesiastical and hierarchical as well as in its human and rational form.¹⁰

This is to say that Protestantism in its original and true form cannot be equated with capitalism, nor can it be equated with the churches which seek to give expression to its principle. But where the churches realize their finitude and ambiguity, and attempt in spite of this to mediate the true spirit of Christ, the principle is at work. "Protestant formative power is at work wherever reality is interpreted with respect to its ground and ultimate meaning."¹¹ It is this prophetic quality in Protestantism which puts the Protestant principle, for Tillich, in its pre-eminent position in respect to its witness to the new creation.

The prophetic element is expressed in the form of protest. In its negative form this protest is a judgment passed on all human activities, ideologies, institutions which, being finite, presume and claim to possess ultimate validity. And this protest is made in the name of the Absolute - God. Protestant claims the right, and accepts the responsibility, in the name of the Christ, of exercising a radical criticism on all the works of man, including itself.

¹⁰Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 192.

¹¹Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 218.

In its positive form, of speaking as a witness, Protestantism likewise claims the right and accepts the obligation of speaking creatively on behalf of the life-giving power of agape, infused into all the works of man, religious and secular.

To move one step further, it needs to be said that, in Tillich's mind, the Protestant principle does not require crystallization into a form or structure for its energies to be released. In fact just the opposite is the case. The moment the principle takes form the spirit disappears; and as long as the principle resists form it is open to be effective in all existent forms of culture and religion. The faith of which Protestantism speaks is uncontainable in earthen vessels; it is not found in any form, and it is found in all forms. "Neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father . . . God is spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."¹²

Faith is not a work of the mind or of the righteous will. It is a gift of grace; it is the consequence of being grasped by the power of the unconditionally real and creative depth in things.¹³

It is Jesus alone who is the bringer of the new reality, and not any exercise of man's will or work of his hands. What man can do is to allow himself to be grasped by this creative power, so that his work takes on a new character, a new dimension of creativity. This inner relation, when allowed to happen, has several consequences. It is realized that Christianity's claim is not to the Christian church, but to the event on which the church is based. It will also close the gap

¹²John 4:21, 24.

¹³Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 302.

between the sacred and the secular, because the whole universe will be seen as God's sanctuary. In the third place, a new conception of the relation of religion and culture will become possible. As Tillich says, there is an inseparable unity of religion and culture, expressed in his well known phrase, "Religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion."¹⁴

Another quality of the Protestant principle that must be mentioned is the theonomous, in contrast to the heteronomous character of Roman Catholicism for example, and the autonomous character of secularism.

Any expression of the spirit of Christianity upholds the selfhood and the integrity of man in opposition to the loss of the self and the disintegration of personality that is observed as a modern phenomenon. This includes the Catholic form, which is also engaged in a struggle with capitalism. But Catholicism's approach to the problem takes a radically different form from that of Protestantism. It seeks to overcome the capitalist spirit by "leading men back to a new Medievalism, back necessarily into the Catholic church."¹⁵ This involves the restoration of virtues that were existent in medieval times, such as a unified Christendom, a religious hierarchical unity which will overcome the disruptive tendencies of nationalism and class conflicts, and a medieval ethics. But this nostalgic view has weaknesses, in that it ignores the fact of progress, which makes impossible

¹⁴Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 57.

¹⁵Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 182.

the restoration of former forms, in that it would be tied to a "self-sufficient finitude", and in that it envisions a solution that is strictly superficial.¹⁶ It does not examine the problem in depth against the criterion of the ultimate, but simply attempts reform on the basis of traditional presuppositions. The Protestant principle, on the other hand, contains the divine and human protests against any absolute claim made for a relative reality.¹⁷ It opposes the principle of heteronomy represented in Catholicism.

The Protestant principle also, as has been noted previously, stands in continual antagonism to the assumption of ultimacy by nationalism or by capitalism. All of these, which represent the domination of a finite power, represent a heteronomy and are repudiated by the Protestant principle.

The Protestant principle stands in opposition also to the autonomous principle of secular society, which, arising in the renaissance period, gives to man, and by transference, to his creations in culture, an autonomy which is unjustified, from the religious viewpoint. Autonomy has value; it is, as Tillich says, the dynamic principle of history. But

Theonomy, on the other hand, is the substance and meaning of history . . . The difference, however, between autonomy and theonomy is that in an autonomous culture the cultural forms appear only in their finite relationship, while in a theonomous culture they appear in their relationship to the unconditioned.¹⁸

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 186f.

¹⁷Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 163.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 45.

The concept of theonomy, as formulated by Tillich, describes the characteristic or principle which prevents, on the one hand, estrangement from the divine by the repressive domination of a finite power, and, on the other hand, estrangement from the divine by a wilful act of self. "A theonomous culture, determined by a direct and intentional expression of ultimate concern, is different from a culture which oscillates between an empty autonomy and a suppressive heteronomy."¹⁹ In other words, a theonomous culture expresses and experiences its finite existence with reference to the divine. It is such a theonomy that the Protestant principle makes possible.

In this discussion of definitions of the Protestant principle it is necessary to devote some consideration to an understanding of the "method of correlation". This has already been approached obliquely by the discussions concerning the boundary situation, the references to the action of love, and the discussion of theonomy.

To be more specific, the method of correlation is implied in the concept of theonomy, which describes human culture correlated with the divine. "A situation is called 'theonomous' not in the sense that God lays down the laws, but in the sense that such an age, in all its forms, is open to and directed toward the divine."²⁰

James Luther Adams offers an interpretation in these words:

¹⁹Paul Tillich, "Reply to Interpretation and Criticism by Paul Tillich", Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, (eds.), The Theology of Paul Tillich, (New York: Macmillan, 1952), p. 314.

²⁰Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 44.

Protestantism here confronts the permanent problem of the one and the many. This problem . . . is 'to find a ground unconditioned and absolute for all that exists conditionally'. The Protestant principle aims to experience the true relation between the unconditional and the conditioned.²¹

and again,

Theonomy is the condition in which spiritual and social forces are imbued with the import of the unconditional as their supporting ground and judge.²²

This involves a dialectical relation between the finite and the infinite, and a recognition of the existence of man and culture on the "boundary situation", in which man may recognize the extreme danger at the present moment of history of succumbing to the blandishments of either autonomy or heteronomy, and in which he may also recognize the possibility of moving toward the achievement of his destiny by the method of correlation of his self and his culture with the ground of his being.

For this 'dialectical' relation between the secular world and the Gestalt of grace I like to use the word 'theonomy', which indicates that neither ecclesiastical heteronomy nor secular autonomy can have the last word in human culture.²³

If theonomy describes this principle, or attitude, or the spirit that man may and should adopt as a creature of the New Being, the method of correlation offers guidance in the carrying out of this way of life. The method of correlation assumes the acceptance of what has been said regarding the Protestant principle, with its radical criticism of all things finite before the bar of the infinite, and also the acceptance of the principles of autonomy, heteronomy and theonomy.

²¹Ibid., p. 288.

²²Ibid., p. 293.

²³Ibid., p. 220.

This is the first requirement. The second is to be willing in actuality to subject the Protestant church to a critical scrutiny from the point of view of the Protestant principle, and to allow the "gestalt of grace" to work in it, unhindered by any "absolutization of the finite". The hope would be that, to the question of where Protestantism is to be found, or of who proclaims the Protestant principle, the answer would come that

Protestantism lives wherever, in the power of the New Being, the boundary situation is preached, its 'No' and its 'Yes' proclaimed.²⁴

II. CAPITALISM AND PROTESTANTISM IN OPPOSITION

Having discussed the more important characteristics of capitalism and Protestantism in a general way, it will now be helpful to examine briefly the points at which they are in conflict in the actual world.

In the first place, capitalism has an impersonal philosophy whereas Protestantism has a personal view of man. Capitalism, essentially, as well as existentially is unrelated to person, either human or divine, being devoted to the production and consumption of goods. The final step in the logic of capitalism reduces man to the level of a means among other means to an end. This purpose of capitalism is one reason for the elimination of personality; the other is the lack of reference to infinity or to the Absolute. For the exclusively horizontal view of existence is compatible with a strictly naturalistic and materialistic orientation to life. Only as the vertical dimension

²⁴Ibid., p. 205.

enters is it possible to conceive of the element of creativity, which presupposes a creative being. Capitalism is essentially godless, therefore impersonal. Protestantism, on the other hand, is essentially godly, and therefore personal. Protestantism stands in relation to a transcendent God, the creator of all. "It is the unconditional character of the biblical God that makes the relation to him radically personal."²⁵ God is the source of the personal. The Protestant principle, standing in relation to this ultimate Person responds as person.

"In the encounter with God, we first experience what person should mean and how it is distinguished from, and must be protected from, the a-personal."²⁶ Thus it follows that Protestantism, representing the personal, and capitalism, representing the a-personal, stand in essential opposition.

In the second place, the materialistic emphasis itself, apart from its effect on personality, sets capitalism apart from the Protestant principle. Capitalism does not have reference to meaning, or to the ground of meaning, since its reference is exclusively to the finite.

This reference (to meaning) has been absent from capitalist society with its reliance on intra-worldly, intro-temporal sources of meaning, its exaltation of the finite into an absolute.²⁷

The fact that capitalism does not have this reference beyond itself, its world and its functions, sets it apart from a philosophy of life which does have reference to the Holy, and which sees the totality

²⁵Paul Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 27.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 12.

of life in relation to the creativity of God. The Protestant principle is not idealistic or other-worldly, negating the value of the worldly, and exalting the unreal or other-worldly; rather, it sees the essential and the existential in correlation, demanding always that the profane be related to, judged by, and redeemed by the Holy. This is what Tillich refers to as belief-ful realism.

A belief-ful realism does not spiritualize its objects. It is the skeptical, unromantic, unsentimental attitude which accepts the objects in their stark givenness. It sees the world with the sober eyes of the scientist or realistic artist, accepting it at the same time as symbolic of the eternal and unconditional source of all meaning and the ground of all being.²⁸

A third point of difference between capitalism and the protestant principle lies in the respective emphases placed on quantity and on quality. Capitalism is based fundamentally on the profit motive. The criterion of success in the capitalist way is the extent of the increase of profit. Profit, represented by money, has none of the attributes of goodness or badness. Production and consumption are also quantitative characteristics whose increase or decrease suggest the health of the capitalist society. Under the capitalist way of life the man who has to build more and bigger barns to store his surplus is the man whose skill and industry have been rewarded. His relation to things and his accumulation of the means to acquire things are his motivation, while the spiritual, aesthetic and social aspects of life are consigned to a subservient position. Such refinements as are introduced into the capitalist enterprise, as the concept of the public welfare, improved

²⁸Ibid., pp. 12f. (H. Richard Niebuhr, writing in the preface).

working conditions, better labor-management relations and the creation of a more favorable corporate "image", are really conceived and developed with the profit motive in mind. Quantity precedes quality.

The Protestant principle, on the other hand, places quality of life above all. This is inherent from its opening attack on the legalism of Catholicism, its emphasis on the spiritual quality of life, and its long history of protest, both negative and positive, in the name of God the Father. Although the man may have barns overflowing, it is to no avail if his soul is found wanting. In the Christian life, too, it is not the amount of Christianity practiced by man that is of importance, but the purpose and the quality of that Christianity.

Fourth and lastly, there is a basic difference between the conformity required by the capitalist system and the criticism demanded by the Protestant principle. "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."²⁹ This is the watchword of Protestantism, its pervading principle, its *raison d'etre*. The capitalist enterprise demands that all men and all culture be molded in such a way as to become adaptable to the philosophy and the practices of the system. Deviation, either private or public, is a threat to the welfare as a whole. Arising originally out of the concept of individuality of persons and freedom of enterprise, it has moved more and more, and necessarily so, in the direction of mass conformity. Where there are innovations, they must take their place within the

²⁹Romans 12:2.

prevailing pattern, representing improvements and refinements of the system rather than innovations. The system has become a leviathon, a heteronomic power which, by its very nature and function, needs, demands and receives almost total allegiance and obedience.

Protestantism, on the other hand, requires courageous criticism of all things finite, a daring act of prophetic witness to the creative power of the infinite, despite the pressures to conform to the standards of the world and to its ways.

A daring act is demanded, an act that penetrates to the deepest level of reality, to its transcendent ground. Such an act is what, in the religious tradition is called 'faith' and what we have called 'belief-ful' or 'self-transcending realism'. Only such a realism is truly realistic. It refuses to be caught by any preliminary level of being and meaning. It cuts through to the ultimate level. In this way belief-ful realism liberates from cynical realism as well as from utopian idealism.³⁰

In another place Tillich brings this to a sharper focus:

Religion seeks to be direction of the conditioned toward the Unconditioned. It stands in essential antithesis, therefore, to a culture whose fundamental principle is the self-sufficiency of the finite. It stands in essential antithesis to the spirit of capitalist society.³¹

Protestantism must stand in eternal judgment upon society. But it must also, and does, according to the Protestant principle, stand ready to criticize itself, and to receive criticism from the secular society in which it exists. The Protestant principle never expresses itself in a final or ultimate form, because it recognizes that to do so would be to destroy itself. "The spirit blows where it wills", and as

³⁰Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 215.

³¹Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 158.

it blows it is to be heeded, whether it blows mildly, gently re-arranging the structures, or whether it blows mightily, with destructive force. Protestantism recognizes a prophetic duty to attempt to see itself and its manifestations through the eyes of the eternal. Being a religious movement, and consequently oriented in spirit to the ground of its being, it naturally feels that its primary sense of judgment and hope for renewal must come from its own relationship with the Divine.

But the Protestant principle, to the extent that religion is the substance of culture and culture the form of religion, experiences a real sense of dialogue with the secular world. There is a correlation in their mutual life together, as they impinge upon each other in many ways, consciously or unconsciously, implicitly or explicitly, deliberately or incidentally. In the process criticism is given and received, which is recognized as legitimate by Protestantism. Protestantism recognizes the temporality and ambiguousness of every human enterprise, including religion, which makes it open to receive valid criticism, whatever its source. It recognizes that spiritual power resides in most secular movements to some degree, and that this reflects an authentic relationship to God, the source of truth. Protestantism is compelled by its own principle to receive any word of God that may be directed to it.

III. PROTESTANTISM'S ACCOMODATION TO CAPITALISM

Unfortunately Protestantism has not found it possible always to live up to the demands of the Protestant principle. Beginning with a dynamic and revolutionary power in Reformation times, Protestantism has found itself over the years to be accomodating its principles to the almost irresistible forces of capitalist society until, at the present time, what is sometimes called the "cultural captivity of the churches" has become an observable fact. The decline of the original power and uniqueness of Protestantism is noticeable from several points of view.

One way of considering this phenomenon is to draw attention to the gradual shift from a spiritual to a material emphasis in the churches of Protestantism, in agreement with the materialism which is characteristic of capitalism. The Protestant principle, ideally, acknowledges only one ultimate loyalty, that to almighty God, with all other finite loyalties having positions of relative and temporary value. In contrast to that original principle there has developed a pluralism of loyalties, one or another of which may call forth a higher degree of devotion, according to the exigencies of the particular situation. Under the stress of national emergency, economic danger or opportunity, extreme public opinion, or personal considerations, any of these finite loyalties may be elevated to the rank of an ultimate loyalty. This is the characteristic of the secular capitalist society and represents an accomodation on the part of the churches when the same attitude prevails within their walls. It represents a watering down

of the spiritual, transcendent quality of the Protestant spirit to the level of the materialistic culture in which it must live.

Another way of seeing this phenomenon of the loss of identity of Protestantism in modern culture is to see the change from a revolutionary movement to a conservative movement, in the space of four hundred years. In the early years of Protestantism its message was one of revolt, whereas now the prevailing mood is one of acceptance of the status quo. This has developed as the Protestant churches have themselves become accepted and have grown in size, wealth and prestige, and as they have found a legitimate place in the culture of the West. Whether they have been sanctioned and accredited by the state, as in many European countries, or whether they have found their compatibility to be with the spirit of capitalism as in America, the temptation and the trend has been similar - to lessen the element of protest and to increase the degree of adjustment to the dominant elements of the cultural situation. This condition is imposed on the churches from without in the European countries, and from within on the American scene. This latter situation follows from the close identity and mutually supportive features of the capitalist spirit and the Puritan spirit, which is one of the historic strains in Protestantism. As the churches have become more culturally acceptable and respectable it has become more difficult to be rebellious and revolutionary. This is the dilemma of the church today, one for which it cannot be criticized lightly, but one with which it must wrestle mightily. As Tillich says, viewing the American scene from the background of his European experience, "Organized Protestantism . . . in the United States . . . is a

social power of the highest degree."³² It will require great faith and great courage to let this "social power" be directed and expressed in a prophetic way.

A third aspect of the osmotic diffusion of values is seen in the increasing use of the quantitative criteria by the churches, in keeping with the use of these criteria by culture in general. The emphasis on size, numbers, wealth and status is symptomatic of the depreciation of the qualitative or spiritual standards by which religion is to be judged. The necessity of bigness is recognized by the business and commercial world today, as well as in the international world of power politics. Size and power, individually or in alliance, is required in order to function efficiently, to compete or to overwhelm. But this is not the true source of strength of the churches. As religion adopts the techniques of the secular world, which it is not, by origin or function, equipped to use properly, and at the same time neglects the powerful and pervasive weapons of the spirit which are its peculiar property, religion retreats from its proper ground.

The cultural values, as well as the ethical values of western capitalist society, which, when analyzed carefully, are seen to have a materialistic and quantitative basis, are those values which have, by and large, been uncritically accepted by Protestantism. Speaking of the situation in Europe before the second World War, which was not radically different from the present American situation, Tillich says that "The extreme tendency in Protestant theology is inclined to banish ethics

³²Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 181.

entirely out of the theological system."³³ This represents an abdication of responsibility in the cultural realm, and a consequent departure on the part of churchmen from the qualitative and human values to a state of conformity with the quantitative values of secular society.

A similar situation is noted by Tillich in the theoretic and aesthetic sphere, which has been neglected by Protestantism. Protestantism has tended to confine itself to the practical and the otherworldly form of the spiritual, allocating to secular culture the guardianship and sponsorship of artistic and aesthetic effort. Consequently Protestantism may be said to have given its blessing to the development of literalist and quantitatively oriented art forms, by default. As Tillich puts it, "In the theoretic sphere not even an earnest attempt has been made to attain to a Protestant ideal of culture."³⁴ In the ensuing discussion he goes on to say that there is no Protestant relation to art, painting or sculpture. The situation is somewhat better in literature, and best in music, "where the old Protestant tradition has not wholly ceased, and where Bach and the Protestant choral reveal the superiority of the heroic old Protestant spirit over capitalist society."³⁵ Parenthetically, a qualification in regard to Tillich's happiness in regard to music may be inserted, on two counts. His German background provided frequent opportunity to hear the music of the man of whom it has been said that he understood the Reformation better than any theologian after Luther. This

³³Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 203.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 203f.

³⁵Ibid.

opportunity is not so readily available in Anglo-Saxon countries. The other point to be made is that music from the Protestant tradition has not by any means been noteworthy in the centuries following Bach. In science and philosophy, likewise, Tillich describes the wearisome and ineffective battle waged by the church, ending in complete abdication of this field of human concern. "One postulated the existence of a pagan brain beside a Christian heart, and rested content."³⁶ One may say that the church, by "resting content", gave its blessing to the secular and scientific description of life.

Finally, the result of the above noted tendencies of accomodation may be described as the exchange of domination by one heteronomy for domination by another. The Protestant principle, coming to life and strength in the period of the Reformation, represented the throwing off of the yoke of the Roman Catholic church and making possible the working of the Holy Spirit in all the private and corporate affairs of men. In removing the basis for the visible, outward, objective and universal worldly control of the Catholic church, the Protestant revolt caused a vacuum to be created in society. Whereas formerly the total life of man had been under the government of the See of Rome, now there was no external authority to govern. The result was that this vacant position was occupied by secular powers, in Lutheranism by the state, in Calvinism by society. The relationship to these two secular powers was such that Lutheranism became more and more dependent on the state, while Calvinism became more and more dependent on society, to the point

³⁶Ibid., p. 204.

³⁷Ibid., p. 193.

that in large sections of the church, capitalist humanism is the realization of the Christian ideal.

In the struggles that inevitably ensued in both cases, the state or society was consistently the victor, and the church consistently the loser. The religious situation "was a retreat, a retirement along the whole line, which, to be sure, saved religious life from utter destruction, but reduced it by and large to a mere side issue."³⁸

The situation today is that the capitalist spirit, manifested in the capitalist society, is the creator of spiritual and secular thought to an overwhelming degree, while religion is an accompanying phenomenon. The prevailing tendencies in Protestantism in America today are, in essence, those which were described by Tillich in Germany some years ago.³⁹ There are two main tendencies, with a third having relation to each of them. The orthodox, briefly stated, is otherworldly and superficially legalistic, therefore unable to actually come to grips with the existential situation. The liberal "approaches closely to, or is almost absorbed by, the temper of capitalist society,"⁴⁰ and is consequently hampered in its criticism of the forms of that society. The pietistic stands in opposition to and in support of both forms in certain aspects. But, "None of them leads us beyond the present situation. They vacillate between protest and compromise with the spirit of capitalist society."⁴¹

The orthodox tendency to retreat and allow the "thing-culture"

³⁸Ibid., p. 45.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 207-211.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 207.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 211.

of modern capitalist society to hold sway while preaching for a return to more spiritual ways and looking for a future time of blessedness is evasive and unrealistic. The liberal tendency, not to retreat but to adopt the value systems and techniques of the "thing-culture", is to become enmeshed in the very problems to which it is seeking answers.

Both of these approaches inevitably encourage what Martin Buber calls the "I-It" relationship, to which the Protestant principle stands in sharpest opposition. Tillich, discussing Buber's concept of the two way character of religious experience, believes that "the I-Thou philosophy of Martin Buber, challenging both liberal and orthodox theology, points to a way beyond their alternatives."⁴²

IV. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE CAPITALIST SPIRIT

The spirit of capitalism has led man irresistibly and inexorably along a path of ceaseless refinement of the tools of education, production, commerce and consumption that has brought with it an incessantly accelerating rate of growth and change. That this has brought important values to man is indisputable, as has been noted. But in the course of this journey there have also been serious losses in the erosion of personal and spiritual values as man has been driven further and further away from a creatively personal relationship with his God and with his neighbor.

The concept of existential "Angst" which has been given classic definition by Kierkegaard is not new. Men have found it described in

⁴²Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 192.

the Scriptures under different terms, and it is a universal condition of human life.

The Angst of finitude drives man to action and at the same time to an alienation from his essential being and to the profounder Angst of guilt and despair.⁴³

But it has received a new and more critical formulation under the form of life fostered by the spirit of capitalism. Every advance made by the capitalist system has brought with it a corresponding shift in the direction of meaninglessness, which has sometimes been consciously realized and sometimes hidden in the unconscious, to be revived later. Each advance in the system which purportedly improves the lot of man actually renders man less important himself and more important for the running of the machine.

The capitalist society itself, being the spirit of capitalism in operation is unable to attack this problem. The spirit of capitalism is part of the problem which capitalism creates and therefore is helpless in the face of the constantly accelerating rush to destruction.

The spirit of capitalism, as has been noted by many writers, including those discussed in this study- Weber, Tawney, Samuelsson, and Tillich- is not to be simply equated with Protestantism, but is a heresy of long standing in human history and of wide extent in human geography.

If by the capitalist spirit is meant the temper which is prepared to sacrifice all moral scruples to the pursuit of profit, it had been only too familiar to the saints and sages of the middle ages.

⁴³Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 102.

It was pre-eminently Catholic cities which were the commercial capitals of Europe and Catholic bankers who were its leading financiers.⁴⁴

The above words of Tawney are given support by Samuelsson who says that it was not the abolition of Roman Catholicism by the Protestant Reformation which led to capitalism; instead, Roman Catholicism was undermined by the already existent spirit of capitalism.⁴⁵

The difference between the medieval situation and the modern one does not lie in the fact of the existence or non-existence of the spirit of capitalism, therefore, but rather in the fact that in the Middle Ages it was the church that held the dominant position, whereas in the modern culture capitalism itself is the dominating power. The capitalistic enterprise prevails over both the state and the church, setting, by the inherent requirements of the system, the tone for all of life. "The capitalistic conception of the state may be characterized as its complete secularization."⁴⁶

This development of the secular spirit may be described as one of the fundamental contradictions in capitalist society. What was given impetus by qualities that appeared to be conducive to the development of man as a spiritual being, has now, because of another aspect of its nature, become the chief agency for the replacement of the spiritual by the material and the secular.

⁴⁴Richard H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1926), p. 76.

⁴⁵Kurt Samuelsson, Religion and Economic Action, (New York: Basic Books, 1961), p. 101.

⁴⁶Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 123.

Three other contradictory elements are listed by James Luther Adams which make it impossible for capitalism to deal constructively with the problems which it creates. One of these is the rapidity of technical advance and the slowness of development of societal forms for adjustment to this form of advance. Activity in the human and social sciences must necessarily be of a peripheral nature in a society whose dominating interest is commercial. Another contradiction is that which exists between the increasing productive power and the decreasing consumptive power of the masses relative to this. The third is the contradiction between the assumed liberty of every individual and the actual dependence of the masses on great concentrations of economic power.⁴⁷

The presence of these contradictions in capitalism itself makes it impossible for capitalism to be effective in any attempt to release man from the possession of the demonic powers that are in control of man's destiny.

Neither is it possible on an individual basis for man to protest effectively and lastingly. An illustration of this, which can be repeated many times over, may be seen in the

three great warriors against the prevailing spirit, and prophets of coming things: Nietzsche, Strindberg, and Van Gogh. The philosopher, the poet, and the painter, all three, were broken mentally and spiritually in their desperate struggle with the spirit of capitalism.⁴⁸

Even while this is said, however, it must be admitted that the

⁴⁷Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 311, comments by J.L.Adams.

⁴⁸Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 47.

individual witness is being multiplied many times, often at great personal sacrifice, and the signs of revolt against the dehumanization of man are becoming more numerous and insistent.

Neither capitalism itself, by attempts at reform which must necessarily become abortive, nor individuals, by personal witness which must inevitably be stifled, can effect lasting reform, because the problems are not reached by programs of self-help or individual protest. The problem is basically a religious one which calls for a radically religious solution. Another way of saying this is to say that the spirit of capitalism is a Christian heresy which must be attacked on Christian grounds. Its heresy consists in the misplacing of faith. The symbols (the capitalist society and its manifestations) have become the objects of faith. As Tillich says, this is idolatrous and Destructive:

Faith, if it takes its symbols literally, becomes idolatrous! It calls for something ultimate which is less than ultimate. Faith, conscious of the symbolic character of its symbols, gives God the honor which is due him.⁴⁹

The heretic is not one who has erroneous beliefs (this is a possible implication of heresy, but not its essence), but the heretic is one who has turned away from the true to the false, idolatrous concern. Therefore he may influence others in the same direction, destroy them, and undermine the community.⁵⁰

Man, being a spiritual being, is brought very close to the abyss of destruction and meaninglessness by his subjection to an impersonal and materialistic power. The way out can be found only if men can be

⁴⁹Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, (New York: Harper & Bros., 1957), p. 53.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 26.

caught up and transformed by creative powers emanating from the depths of being and history. The churches cannot espouse an official social philosophy or program, but, "if the Protestant principle is apprehended in a vital and relevant way it should lead to a turning away from the void of meaninglessness and to a new creation."⁵¹

V. THE PROTESTANT PRINCIPLE AS SOLUTION

The tragic outcome of the capitalist form of society in terms of the estrangement of man is not due to a basic defect in its religious partner, Calvinism, but to a misdirected emphasis in the interpretation of the religious viewpoint of the Calvinistic form of Protestantism.

The aim (in Calvinism) is not personal salvation but the glorification of God, to be sought, not by prayer only, but by action - the sanctification of the world by strife and labor . . . For the Calvinist the world is ordained to show forth the majesty of God, and the duty of the Christian is to live for that end. His task is at once to discipline his individual life and to create a sanctified society.⁵²

What is emphasized in popular Calvinism, and what may be regarded as a misinterpretation of the Christian faith, is the majesty and creativity of God - the exaltation of the first person of the Trinity at the expense of the second and third. The power of God to bring forth ex nihilo the life of the universe in all its mystery and complexity is the element of the Godhead which is brought to the fore, calling for worship and obedience.

This obedience is thus directed to a God who has created fiat.

⁵¹Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 312, comments by J.L. Adams.

⁵²Tawney, op. cit., pp. 96f.

God is envisioned as a transcendent Being, objective in his works and remote in his absoluteness. He has created the heavens and the earth, set them in their courses, expressed by his Word the law of life, and then devoted himself to being the divine judge, holding the power of eternal salvation or damnation in his hands. The consequences of this objective and legalistic view of God are twofold. In the first place God is removed from the possibility of exercising a compassionate and redemptive influence on the lives of men. God is heavenly judge, and dispenses reward and punishment according to the letter of the law, which is once and for all established.

The second consequence is that man, being in charge of and having "dominion" over the world, exercises his prerogatives within the context of legalism and objectivity, which is regarded as the way of God and man. This leads to an inevitable emphasis on the material - the wise use of resources, natural and human, the thrift in relation to the use of money, the assumed blessing of God in the form of wealth bestowed on the industrious, and the development of the law conducive to the smooth functioning of trade and commerce.

A dilemma appears, in that the Calvinist-capitalist culture, beginning with the worship of an exalted God as the chief end of man, comes to the point of the worship of mammon, ostensibly as an indication of godliness, but in reality displacing God. It is now being found that "you cannot worship God and mammon". To reverse the meaning of a phrase of Tillich's which is given with a positive overtone and a creative hope - the phrase being, "Religion is the substance of culture and culture is the form of religion" - it may be said that in this case

it is regrettably true that, with qualifications and reservations of course, "Calvinism is the substance of capitalism and capitalism is the form of Calvinism". The present religious and cultural dilemma is, to a very significant degree, due to the working out of the implications of a distorted emphasis in one branch of Christianity and one form of Protestantism.

Given the dynamic correlation that has existed between religion and culture it is not surprising that objectivity in religion would tend to influence culture in the direction of objectivity, as has happened in the western democracies. The same observation applies to literalism, in that a literalistic outlook in religion would be compatible with a literalistic outlook in society. That this is true in the western capitalist democracies, especially the Anglo-Saxon ones, cannot be denied. Similarly, absolutism in the spiritual sphere can be transmuted into absolutism in the economic and political field. Rigidity and conservatism are notable, both in Protestantism and in capitalism. Particularism, emphasizing the objective and the existentially particular in religion also encourages particularism in society, as found in the excessive importance attached to the forms and patterns of the economic, cultural and political society.

But these conditions all have to do with a form of Christianity which does not represent the whole of that faith, and which, in some important aspects, does violence to the true spirit of Christianity and to the Protestant principle. The true relation between particularism and universalism, which is a fundamental relation in the Protestant principle, is found in the New Creation which God brought into being

through Christ. Christ is the New Being.

What is particular in him is that he crucified the particular in himself for the sake of the universal. This liberates his image from bondage both to a particular religion . . . and to the religious sphere as such; the principle of love in him embraces the cosmos, including both the religious and the secular sphere.⁵³

The relation of the particular to the universal, the existential to the essential, the finite to the infinite - with the latter always the criterion of the former - constitutes the Protestant principle, developed according to the method of correlation, as Tillich sees it. All must be evaluated, criticized, re-created in relation to the New Creation which is in Christ.

Christ is the place where the New Reality is completely manifest because in him in every moment, the anxiety of finitude and the existential conflicts are overcome. That is his divinity . . . What he is, is healing power overcoming estrangement because he himself was not estranged.⁵⁴

This is the core of the Protestant message in its essential purity, going beyond all of the circumstantial variations which issue forth in many forms and emphases, such as mysticism, sacerdotalism, literalism, myth and ritual, or Puritanism. The central message of Christianity, in whatever manner it may be conveyed, is the New Creation, which has the essential power to take the existential upon itself, and, by the method of correlation, cause other new creations to appear. As Jesus said to Nicodemus, "You must be reborn", meaning, of course, a spiritual rebirth.⁵⁵

⁵³Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, pp. 81f.

⁵⁴Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 212.

⁵⁵John 3:5.

According to Tillich the New Reality constitutes the essence of the Christian message.

The Christian message is the message of a New Reality in which we can participate and which gives us the power to take anxiety and despair upon ourselves. And this we must, and this we can communicate.⁵⁶

This kind of experience and this kind of ultimate correlation with the conditions of the existential situation, this kind of absoluteness with regard to the infinite, and relativity with regard to the finite, and this kind of faith in relation to existential anxiety constitutes that which is unique and saving in Christianity, and which is perceived by the Protestant principle. This is why true Protestantism, with its breadth of application to concrete human situations, with, at the same time, a sharpness of focus in respect to its source, is uniquely able to be a saving power in relation to the Protestant churches and on behalf of mankind. Protestant faith, grounded in the essential and formed in the existential, can be effective in a creative way that is denied to the faith of such absolute structures as the Catholic church or the capitalist society, to the faith of such evanescent beliefs as mysticism, or to the faith of such autonomous beings as secular man.

Faith must unite the tolerance based on its relativity with the certainty based on its ultimate concern. In all types of faith this problem is alive, but especially in the Protestant form of Christianity. From the power of self-criticism, and from the courage to face one's own relativity comes the greatness and danger of the

⁵⁶Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 208.

Protestant faith. Here more than anywhere else the dynamics of faith become manifest and conscious; the infinite tension between the absoluteness of its claim and the relativity of its life.⁵⁷

The New Reality, found through and in Christ, is what leads to the Protestant principle, which has elements of both rigidity and flexibility - rigidity in regard to its ultimate concern and flexibility in regard to its form. The Protestant principle exercises a prophetic witness, both negatively and positively, on all existent forms and ideologies, in the name of its ultimate concern. This is another way of expressing the method of correlation.

To carry the concept of the New Creation one step further, it may be said to be an expression of agape - the redemptive love of God expressed in Christ. This love, as the universal ground of being, and as it may be existentially expressed through the church, is the motivating and guiding principle of Christianity, and of its interpreter, the Protestant principle. According to the Protestant principle the church exists to express to an estranged world the good news of the New Creation based on agape.

Another step may be taken in this discussion by a consideration of the concept of "belief-ful realism" as developed by Tillich. This follows naturally from the foregoing discussion, in that a realistic acceptance of the existential situation on the one hand, and the relation of it to eternity and infinity on the other, is called for. The acceptance of these polarities then makes possible the appreciation of the correlative aspects inherent in them. Here again the

⁵⁷Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 57.

applicability of the method of correlation becomes manifest. In the use of the compound term, belief-ful realism, Tillich apparently has reference to the adequate and inadequate connotations which are possible for each term separately. In the use of the term "realism" Tillich wishes his theology to have relevance to creation and to carry the thought of the reality of life in its full range of glory and sin, as opposed to the idealistic conception which minimizes or negates the reality of life. At the same time he does not use the term in the materialistic sense of this-worldliness, without reference to the eternal. In his use of the term "belief-ful" he desires to include the life-giving element, making the whole expression religiously meaningful; at the same time he does not use the term in the sense of possessing certain or fixed "beliefs".

Belief-ful Realism is an unconditional acceptance of the serious importance of our concrete situation in time and of the situation of time in general in the presence of eternity. Such an attitude . . . includes the hope of a social and economic life in which the spirit of capitalism - the symbol of self-sufficient finitude - has been overcome.⁵⁸

This concept of belief-ful realism, which is an expression of the Protestant principle, derives, as has been seen earlier, from the love of God which is manifest in the New Creation. Every aspect of life that is approached by the operation of the Protestant principle in the expression of a belief-ful realism, is approached within the context and from the standpoint of agape. Agape itself is unstructured, in-finite and unparticularized, and is an expression of the Holy God.

⁵⁸Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 116.

Religion, reacting upon culture from this point of view, may be called a positive and creative manifestation of Tillich's principle that "religion is the substance of culture", and it may be hoped that culture may become the form of this type of religion. The place of this new realism in modern society is suggested by Tillich in these words:

The realisms . . . of the capitalist period have been destroyed . . . but a new realism is about to gain ascendancy. With emotional zeal at first, then with objective and metaphysical intuition it has uncovered the demonism present in the social world, and, perhaps, as in the case of metaphysics and painting, it may be at the point of developing into a belief-ful realism.⁵⁹

The "kairos" concept enters here, as the "right time" for the development of that form of the Protestant principle, belief-ful realism. When the effective religious principle, in this case the existential activation of the eternal principle of love, becomes manifest at the right time, it is a time of kairos, in Tillichian language. What is needed is "a present time to be at hand which is resolved to make its own existence and its forms the vessels of eternal meaning."⁶⁰

When Tillich was writing his The Religious Situation in Germany during the years following the first World War, he believed that a time of kairos was at hand. His belief was not fully realized at that time, but in retrospect it appears that it marked the beginning of a time of crisis leading to a time of kairos, which is approaching at the present hour of history. Tillich would call the great religious periods, when "the moment of time is invaded by eternity",⁶¹ times of kairos, such

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 101.

⁶⁰Ibid., p. 52.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 18.

times as the incarnation and the Reformation meeting this description. To use the concept of time being invaded by eternity is another way of recognizing the method of correlation at work, wherein the present and the finite are judged and offered re-creation by the eternal and the infinite. Many indications point to the possibility that such a time may rapidly be approaching once more. The kairos is, in a sense, a merging of the absolute and the existential when the existential has moved to a point where it must, to avoid complete disintegration, allow the invasion of the eternal. It is the time of belief-ful realism, "the antithesis of both Utopia and the Golden Age",⁶² (the Golden Age representing the conservative theory of history which finds meaning only in the past, and the Utopian representing the visionary theory which finds meaning only in the future).

The churches of the present time are appearing to awaken to the meaning of the Protestant principle, and to move tentatively in the direction of the method of correlation. However, they approach this with considerable fear and trepidation, as well as with a sense of guilt, while avoiding the thoroughgoing application of the form-destroying and spirit-creating Protestant principle, as being too risky. But it is just this radical confrontation with essential reality that offers salvation for mankind. The Protestant churches, as the carriers of the Protestant principle, have it within their power at the present time in history to exert a most powerfully critical and spiritually creative influence on individuals and on society, if the Christian justification

⁶²Ibid., p. 19.

for the use of the method of correlation can be demonstrated. The meaning of this historical period needs to be found, and expressed.

Historical realism . . . must see every period as having its own meaning; yet its meaning cannot be intrinsic. It lies rather in the relation of an era to an ultimate that is beyond every point of time.⁶³

To be more specific, the Christian churches, by making use of the ultimate principle of love in radical correlation to all existing temporal forms, including the forms of religion, capitalism, nationalism, can bring to bear a mighty force of creative power.

In the fight of God against religion the fighter for God is in the paradoxical situation that he has to use religion in order to fight religion. It is a testimony to present day Christianity that it is aware of this situation.⁶⁴

The church is beginning once again to realize that its mission is not related to its forms in an ultimate way, but this recognition is still very tentative and hesitant, and laden with feelings of guilt and insecurity. The dilemma of the church is that

It must protest against every religious or cultural realization which seeks to be intrinsically valid, but that it needs such realization if it is to be able to make its protest in any meaningful way.⁶⁵

As Tillich says, Protestantism must exist in the constant tension between the sacramental and the prophetic, the constitutive and the corrective element, which, while creating a dilemma, also creates an opportunity. For the Protestant principle must express itself in

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, pp. 93f.

⁶⁵Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 193.

correlation with the ultimate, as well as in correlation with the existential situation of man. The ability to do this, when Protestantism is true to its principle, constitutes the genius of Protestantism, while the need for it is the mark of this generation, to which the many signs of anxiety, estrangement, disintegration and revolt bear testimony.

Only a religious faith that can exist in the continuous flux of the spiritual and the material in correlation can bring a meaningful answer to the probings and the questionings of modern man. Protestantism not only is able to do this but must do it because of its principle, based on the movement of love which is itself unfixed and unstructured, but always relevant.

The question remains: can Protestantism be true to its basic character and its ground, and can the churches of Protestantism translate these essential truths into existential action in a compatible, correlative and creative way?

CHAPTER VII

THE CHURCH ON THE "BOUNDARY SITUATION"

"We are in the midst of a world revolution affecting every section of human existence, forcing upon us a new interpretation of life and the world."¹ With the first part of this statement all churchmen will agree, but it does not necessarily follow that they will agree to the second part. Of all human institutions the church, dealing as it does with "sacred and eternal things" is, in the opinion of the average churchman, the last that should change, lest it forsake its divine base and become "worldly". But there is real reason for believing that the truth is just the opposite - that the church should be in the vanguard of those movements that are creatively critical of all society and religion. The church is called upon to live on the "border" and to be the mediator between what is and what ought to be. Since these are always changing in relation to each other the church also is required to be responsive to change. The church is not allowed to become identified with any finished form, or any "absolutization of the particular", but must seek to be identified with the spirit which "blows where it listeth", and at the same time to be in relation with the existential which is always in a state of ambiguity. It is in a somewhat analogous position as an institution to Tillich as a person, who says of himself,

¹Paul Tillich, Morality and Beyond, (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 82.

As a theologian I tried to remain a philosopher, and conversely so. To have left the border and decided on the one or the other would have been less difficult. But inwardly it was impossible; the external fate met the need of the inward necessity with peculiar opportuneness.²

It would be easier for the church to "preach the Gospel" and remain aloof from the world, or to become conformed to the world, but inwardly it is impossible. The church must retain its ambiguous and risky position on the border. It is necessary to justify this statement, and the attempt will be made in this chapter. The subject will be treated as a re-evaluation of the role of the church according to the categories of the vertical and the horizontal dimensions, the objective and the spiritual qualities, and the ideologies of ecclesiasticism and secularism.

I. THE VERTICAL AND THE HORIZONTAL DIMENSIONS

The fundamental importance of the vertical dimension in regard to Christianity cannot be overstressed. It expresses the direct and personal relation existing between man and God as expressed once and for all in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that those who believe in him shall not perish, but shall have eternal life." The validity of the vertical dimension is seen in the direct and personal relation with God as exemplified in Jesus. The event of Christianity upon which its life and message are grounded is "a personal life, the image of which, as it impressed itself upon his followers, shows no break in his relation to God, and no claim for

²Paul Tillich, The Interpretation of History, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 40f.

himself in his particularity."³

This relation is, by implication, possible to all men who allow themselves to be grasped by the Holy Spirit. It is of such people that the church is composed.

The church is not organized religion. It is not hierarchical authority. It is not a social organization. (The church) is primarily a group of people who express a new reality by which they have been grasped. (It) is the community of the New Being.⁴

The importance of the vertical dimension in the life of the Christian and of the church must be unequivocally maintained, firm against all inroads of intellectualism and secularism, for it is from the participation in the Holy that the experience of the New Creation can come. At the same time there is the need to be cautioned against the spiritualization of men, in the Greek mode, forgetting the unity of the whole man, in the biblical mode. As Tillich has expressed it,

One of the unfortunate consequences of the intellectualization of man's spiritual life was that the word 'spiritual' was lost and replaced by mind or intellect . . . man was divided into a bloodless intellect and a meaningless vitality . . . But in man nothing is 'merely biological' as nothing is 'merely spiritual'. Every cell of his body participates in his freedom and spirituality, and every act of his spiritual creativity is nourished by his vital dynamics.⁵

The danger in respect to the vertical dimension is that it may degenerate into an individualistic form of religious concern, as is

³Paul Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 81.

⁴Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 212.

⁵Paul Tillich, The Courage to Be, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), pp. 82f.

found in the types of Protestantism that unduly exalt this vertical dimension. Although the vertical dimension is primary it is not exclusive. There is required in Protestantism a re-evaluation of the relation of the vertical and the horizontal dimensions of faith, realizing the existence of the boundary situation in this aspect of religion, and the necessity for the Christian and the church to live on it in a posture of creative expectation. In this respect the message of the Protestant church is three-fold:

1. It must insist upon the radical experience of the boundary situation.
2. The Protestant church must pronounce the 'Yes' that comes to man in the boundary situation when he takes it upon himself in his ultimate seriousness.
3. Protestantism must witness to the 'New Being' through which alone it is able to say its word in power. The New Being, which for the Christian's faith is manifest in Jesus as the Christ, is effective in the life of the individual personally as well as in the life of the community.⁶

The other dimension is the horizontal. This too is of intrinsic importance in the Christian faith, but is also subject to the danger of overemphasis, to the neglect of the vertical dimension. This is exemplified in what is often called the "older liberalism" which, influenced by the behavioral sciences and secularism, over-reached itself in the effort to improve the lot of man in the worldly aspect. An excessive pre-occupation with the material level of man's welfare activity is undoubtedly motivated by love, but it sometimes becomes a one-sided love, expressing itself toward man as an object. The highest form of

⁶Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), p. 204.

love is the love which preserves the individual who is both the subject and the object of love. It is in this "loving person to person relationship that Christianity manifests its superiority to any other religious tradition."⁷

What is required is the realization on the part of the Christian and the church that the horizontal dimension pervades all aspects of human life at all levels, and also that the vertical dimension may impinge at any point and penetrate to any level. At whatever point the church may be, its concern is to be on both dimensions at once, correlating the horizontal and the vertical, with the vertical as the norm. Tillich expresses this thought in slightly different words:

The Church, as the community of the New Being, is the place where the new theonomy is actual. But from there it pours into the whole of man's cultural life and gives a spiritual center to man's cultural life.⁸

And again:

We find contemporary theologians (like Bonhoeffer, martyred by the Nazis) maintaining that Christianity must become secular, and that God is present in what we do as citizens, as creative artists, as friends, as lovers of nature, as workers in a profession, so that it may have eternal meaning. Christianity for these men has become an expression of the ultimate meaning in the actions of our daily life. And this is what it should be.⁹

The church, as the guardian of the vertical dimension, may stand in ascetic aloofness, apart from the world, viewing it as wicked. Or,

⁷Paul Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 27.

⁸Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), I: p. 148.

⁹Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, p. 94.

imbued with a missionary zeal it may throw itself into some particular reform in the horizontal dimension. Or, more adequately,

It may at once accept and criticize, tolerate and amend, welcome the gross world of human appetites as the squalid scaffolding from amid which the life of the spirit must rise, and insist that this also is the material of the Kingdom of God.¹⁰

The point to be made is that the church must recognize the validity of both the vertical and the horizontal dimensions, and must see that its destiny is not to find refuge in withdrawing from the world according to the vertical dimension, nor to find justification in works according to the horizontal dimension, but to take the much more difficult, but truly creative role of the boundary. This requires a profound understanding of the meaning and implications of the New Creation as well as a profound attitude of prophetic criticism of itself and of society at every moment and at every point, in correlation with the ultimate. To paraphrase a word of Paul, the church is not to be conformed to the world, but transformed by every word of the spirit; to be conformed to the spirit and transforming the world.

We can speak to people only if we participate in their concern, not by condescension, but by sharing in it. We can point to the Christian answer only if, on the other hand, we are not identical with them. And thirdly, we can use these people and their ideas to awaken those among our group who are still living in a secure tower.¹¹

¹⁰Richard H. Tawney, Religion and the Rise of Capitalism, (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1926), p. 94.

¹¹Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 207.

II. THE OBJECTIVE AND THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSIONS

The church has long been a structured institution in the world. As such it possesses power and prestige, and commands and receives loyalty from its members and respect from the community. The church may also become a power structure with influence over widely diversified areas of life, as was the case with the Catholic church of the pre-Reformation period. From the church comes the legalistic expressions of moral and theological principles that are binding upon its members, and by which their lives are ordered. The institutionalized church will also possess wealth, own property, render many kinds of services, maintain a priesthood - all of which constitute the visible church. All of this is a natural accompaniment of the promulgation of the Gospel in human society, and, as such, is not a legitimate subject of criticism.

However, the tendency toward what Tillich calls the "absolutization of the finite" is ever present, and churches develop an autonomy of their own which becomes a heteronomy in respect to churchmen. The church may become an end in itself, rather than a means to an end, assuming unto itself powers and privileges that properly accrue to God alone. "Systems of ethical rules, that is, moralisms, are imposed on the masses by authorities"¹², in an objective way, that may appear to have little relation to the spiritual ground. The dogmatic enunciation of demands of various kinds comes to the people, not in relation to the

¹²Ibid., p. 138.

God whom they should know as personal Father, but in relation to an objective and worldly institution. "Moralism of law makes Pharisees or cynics, or it produces in the majority of people an indifference which lowers the moral imperative to conventional behavior."¹³

There is a basic psychological and religious need for the concretion of the spiritual, which aids and abets this development in the direction of institutionalism, and which then in turn is fostered by the institution which has become objectified. This, when carried uncritically to an extreme, leads to dogmatism, literalism, legalism, and to a doctrine of salvation by works, effectively drawing a curtain between man and God. It prevents a first-hand, personal experience of the living God, and substitutes a second-hand, impersonal performance of duties. To an unmeasurable, but undoubtedly considerable, extent, this is a very prevalent situation in the churches today, both Protestant and Catholic. The institution, with its umbrella-like protective activity, provides security from imagined dangers of the spirit, while exposing churchmen to the real dangers of unspirituality. It exposes them to the insinuating temptations of the secular culture, while sheltering churchmen from the awakening presence of the Holy Spirit.

The other extreme, the spiritualization of religion, in the forms of mysticism and pietism, while less common in the modern age than in an earlier day, constitutes a danger in its own way. In its classic forms of mysticism and pietism it represents a retreat from reality, a negation of the world, a repudiation of man's wholeness, a rejection of

¹³Ibid., p. 142.

the earth which God created and found good, and a withdrawal from the community of man. Mysticism shows marks of error on these philosophical grounds, but in addition to this it shows irresponsibility on practical grounds. In this respect it leaves society to the machinations of the powers of this world with the consequence of an inevitable descent to the materialistic thing-culture of today, with its dehumanization of man and lack of reference to an ultimate concern. For the church to succumb to the error of objectification with its attendant consequences is to abrogate the law of God, while to fall into the error of spiritualization is to abdicate its own responsibility in the world. The task of the church is that of mediation of the Word of God, which is absolute and eternal, to a world in its existential situation of ambiguity and temporality. This can be accomplished neither by cutting its ties with the Ground of its being nor by cutting its ties with the world in which it exists, but by being on the border.

The task of theology is mediation, mediation between the eternal criterion of truth as it is manifest in the picture of Jesus as the Christ, and the changing experiences of individuals and groups, their varying questions and their categories of perceiving reality . . . the term 'theology' implies, as much, a mediation, namely, between the mystery, which is theos, and the understanding, which is logos.¹⁴

These words apply as well to the church as to theology, the church being the bearer of theology and the interpreter of it to the world. Religion may be seen not as a special form of life, ruling over other forms, or as a special form of life, divorced from other forms. Rather, religion is the life-blood, the inner power, the ultimate

¹⁴Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. xiii, Introduction.

meaning of all life. Religion is the point at which the dimension of the essential and the existential meet. They each impinge on the other, and in their polarity they act and react. "The 'sacramental' or the 'holy' inflames, imbues, inspires all reality and all aspects of existence."¹⁵

This represents the existential attitude of religion, in which religion becomes "involved" in all aspects of culture. It is not identified with culture or separated from it, but involved in it, participating in a situation. The church is to be seen as a participant in the affairs of life and culture, in the private and the public spheres, at all levels. Being on the boundary line between the objective and the spiritual, and keeping its relation to both spheres, it is in a unique position to be a mediating influence between the objective realities of culture and the substantive realities of spirit. It need not be identified with any particular form or institution of itself, nor need it be identified with any institution or ideology of society, but it may be present in all of them as a correlating or mediating force.

The basis on which the witness of the church rests, and the criterion of its life and work is the Ultimate, as expressed in agape. The church, in its dealings with the world, has always, to a greater or lesser degree, acted in correlation with the ultimate principle. Tillich gives examples of the rhythm of criticism, counter criticism and self-criticism throughout the history of Christianity. They show that Christianity is not imprisoned in itself and that in all its

¹⁵Ibid., p. 43.

radical judgments some degree of acceptance of counter judgments took place.¹⁶ This is possible because of the quickening power of love which is unrestricted as to time, place, person or circumstance. It is never particularized or finalized, but lives in dynamic and creative relationship with any cultural form.

Love alone transforms itself according to the concrete demands of every individual and social situation without losing its eternity and dignity and unconditional validity. Love can adapt itself to every phase of a changing world . . . this is why Paul and Luther struggled so profoundly against the 'Law', and why they insisted on the deadening consequences of the law, and the vivifying power of love.¹⁷

The method of correlation, which is being advocated in this study as a means of renewing the churches and restoring their effectiveness as creative agencies in the existential situation of modern man, depends on the acceptance of agape as the criterion of all thought and action. This agape is believed to have become incarnated in Jesus, who therefore became known as the Christ, or the New Creation. It is Christ himself who is so regarded, in his totality, in his essential being as the Son of God, and not in the particularizations of his words, his travels, his birth and other such material factors.

If the love of God, the agape, can be maintained as the plumb line by which all things are measured and to which all things are related, two fundamentally important things will happen to the people of the churches. In the first place a release from religious bondage

¹⁶Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, p. 89.

¹⁷Tillich, Morality and Beyond, p. 89.

and the fear of irreligion will come. As one moves deeper and deeper "into" Christianity he discovers that religion consists of many radii but only one center. He finds that all radii lead to the center and proceed from the center. Such radii, or aspects of Christianity as worship, doctrine, history of the church, theology, symbolism, scriptures and many others are all avenues of participation in the Holy. In each case the avenue or radius is derivative and not primary; that which is primary is the center, agape. Each aspect of religious life that has developed is a "particularization of the Absolute", and not the Absolute. Essentially they are all expendable as suggested in the book of Revelation, "There was no temple in the holy city for the temple was the Lord God,"¹⁸ but in existence they serve as symbols of the reality in which they participate. Furthermore, as it is realized that these "finite structures" have arisen in response to the spiritual needs of man in the context of culture which is finite and subject to constant change, it becomes apparent that these temporal manifestations do not possess intrinsic validity or ultimacy. They are derivative, functional and relative in respect to the ultimate, and not to be accorded the worship that belongs only to God.

In the second place, with the knowledge that finite mediating structures have developed in the past in correlation with the infinite, and in response to the psychological and sociological needs of man, it will become apparent that in the present and in the future similar structures may develop or be developed to perform a like function.

¹⁸Revelation 21:22.

This recalls some words of Tillich in which he gives support to the operation of the method of correlation with reference to his concept of religious socialism.

Religious Socialism . . . (asks) how is it possible from the standpoint of religion or the eternal to reach any decisions which are applicable to the world of time? . . . It above all others raises the demand for that which we have designated belief-ful realism - that is, an unconditioned acceptance of the serious importance of our concrete situation in time, and of the situation of our time in general in the presence of eternity; such an attitude contains the negation of every kind of romanticism and utopianism, but it includes the hope of a social and economic life in which the spirit of capitalism - the symbol of self-sufficient finitude - has been overcome.¹⁹

One may say that the forms and structures in all aspects of culture, religious and secular, which become symbols of "self-sufficient finitude" stand in opposition to the Protestant principle, which says that all forms and structures shall stand in their recognized ambiguity, judged by the absolute standard of love. Insofar as they are embodiments of love they are forms and structures in which life is possible, in which life overcomes its destructive forms.

It is necessary to have forms and structures to give embodiment to love. Having moved along these forms and structures, which have been likened to radii, to the center, and having discovered the relativity of the radii and the absoluteness of the center, one is now in a position to survey the contemporary scene from the standpoint of the center, and in relation to the cultural situation. It now becomes possible to move with faith and courage in the true spirit of the

¹⁹Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, (New York: Meridian Books, 1959), p. 116.

Protestant principle, critically and creatively, toward a renewal of the church. Some forms and structures will remain unchanged or slightly modified, some will be radically altered, some will receive a new direction of emphasis, some will be eliminated, and some will be newly created.

III. ECCLESIASTICISM AND SECULARISM

There is, in Protestantism as well as in Catholicism, a temptation to ecclesiasticism, which may better be described as ecclesiolatry. It becomes identified, in its own mind, with the holy community, secure in its perfection, unconscious of its ambiguity. The church, by its very existence as a temple of God, is presumed to take unto itself the qualities of Godlikeness, becoming not a vessel in which the grace of God may be carried, but the embodiment of that grace itself. The awe with which the unknown is regarded, the "fear" of the Lord, and the concern for the after-life, all are conducive to the uncritical reverence accorded to the church, and expected by the church in many cases.

By association with and participation in the life of the church the churchman is also tempted to become Pharisaical and self-righteous. He derives a mysterious quality of holiness from the presence of the holy institution, in comparison with the secular man. The laymen of the church often expects to receive protection from the discomforts and hazards arising from the vicissitudes of human existence, by virtue of the fact that he is related to the religious institution which stands above this world.

Ecclesiasticism may sometimes represent a religion without ethics, ethics being unnecessary where true religion is known and lived. It may withdraw from cultural involvement as being of worldly character, preferring to devote itself to prayer and liturgy, and the observance of religious duties, being an island of righteousness in the midst of an ocean of sin. The hope is that men, adrift on this ocean, will steer for the island and find saving help, achieve a new birth, and become an example for others in the same predicament.

Ecclesiasticism represents an over-emphasis of the religious life and the religious institution in contrast to the secular life and culture.

The opposite extreme is secularism. Secularism sees the church as an anachronism in a world motivated by sensual and material drives, and as a relic of a pre-rational age, as totally unrelated to reality. Secularism, grounded in the spirit of the Enlightenment and the spirit of capitalism, sees man as competent to develop, in a this-worldly context, whatever knowledge and techniques are necessary for his fulfillment, without the aid of supernaturalism. Secularism represents self-sufficient autonomy.

The two polarities of ecclesiasticism and secularism as here outlined represent unrealistic extremes in both cases. It is not possible to admit that religion is utterly unrelated to the existent world and is completely unrealistic relative to culture, and it is likewise not possible to admit that there is in secular culture no element that can be called religious, at least in the broad sense. Man is not a disembodied spirit, nor is he a dispirited body. He himself

expresses in his existence the polarity of spirit and material, and he lives in the creative tension which exists on that account. One may say, with Tawney, that

A religious philosophy, unless it is frankly to abandon nine-tenths of conduct to the powers of darkness, cannot admit the doctrine of a world of business and economic relations, self-sufficient and divorced from the ethical and religious.²⁰

Likewise, with Tillich, it can be said that

According to the Protestant principle, it is possible that within the secular world grace is operating not in a tangible but in a transparent form. This possibility implies that grace is not bound to any finite form, not even to a religious form.²¹

The churches are thus presented with an opportunity in the present time of criticism, creativity and revolt, to give expression to the Protestant principle. In doing this they will be both in and of the world in one sense, and both in and beyond the world in another sense. In the first sense they will realize their temporality and ambiguity, their involvement with all the actualities of culture, their dialectical relationship with secular movements, the giving and receiving of criticism. In the second sense they will be faithful to the ultimate criterion, and, by the method of correlation, will subject every intellectual, scientific, cultural and religious insight, doctrine and program to searching criticism in relation to that ultimate criterion. Protestantism seeks to develop a "gestalt of grace", neither retiring from secularism nor surrendering to it.²² This it can do if it is true to the Protestant principle.

²⁰Tawney, op. cit., p. 30.

²¹Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 213.

²²Ibid., p. 214

CHAPTER VIII

THE RENEWAL OF THE CHURCH

It will have become apparent that this study is being pursued from a point of view generally favorable to the thinking of Paul Tillich. This is so, because of the relevance of a particular theme recurrent in Tillich which is peculiarly appropriate to the theme of this study, this Tillichian theme being what is called the "Protestant principle". Were the study concerned with esoteric questions of philosophy or theology there would undoubtedly be many points that would be the proper subject of questioning, discussion or dispute. Tillich himself recognizes the impossibility of creating a finished theological or philosophical system, and is satisfied to have moved the discussion on to another level, where it will continue to be developed.

From the standpoint of ethics, with which this study is concerned, and more particularly the question of the renewal and relevance of the churches in society, Tillich's concept of the Protestant principle is valid, whether or not full agreement is held with all aspects of Tillich's system, in its total structure.

The Protestant principle offers both stability and flexibility. The stability is expressed in the variously named subjects of ultimacy, such as the New Being, the New Creation, the Absolute, the Ground of Being, the Unconditional, the Infinite, Love as Agape. These concepts are not identical, but they are aspects, or ways of conceiving of God, and they provide the center around which all else revolves, the ground

on which all else is built, the quality by which all else is judged. There is no relativity here, no finiteness, no ambiguity; they represent the perfect, infinite and true, providing the standard for all.

The flexibility afforded by the Protestant principle is the recognition of the finiteness, imperfection and ambiguity of all existential works of man in every field of thought and activity. It is not possible for anything finite to take on the quality of infinity, for anything temporal to take on the quality of eternity, for anything partial to take on the quality of wholeness; in other words, it is not possible for anything involved in existence to rise above the ambiguities inherent in existence.

The Protestant principle assumes the two features of stability and flexibility, and further assumes a continual and creative dialogue between the Unconditioned and the conditioned, by the method of correlation. A continual and radical exercise of prophetic criticism of all the works of man, in the light of the Absolute, is to be carried on. Acting from the ground of the perfect, Protestantism witnesses for the good that resides in any existent form, and protests against the lack of good in that form. It recognizes that no existent form is perfect, that all forms reflect some degree of perfection, and that by the method of correlation all existent forms may be brought closer to perfection.

The Protestant principle, accepted, understood, and applied, makes it possible to avoid the "absolutization of the finite", or the belief that some created form is final, on the one hand; and on the other hand it makes it possible to avoid the feeling of "existential

despair", or the belief that all forms, including man himself, are meaningless. Understood and used by churchmen, the Protestant principle will help them to see themselves and their works in their true relation to God; it will help prepare them to be led to new truths; and it will help them to see purpose in their lives and works.

These qualities are essential to constructive effort in the complex world of today, for man is living in a period which is characterized by a radical and revolutionary transformation of one historical era into another one. The temptation to absolutize present forms, or to eliminate them and create new forms, or to retreat in despair, is always present. A period of profound criticism, profound despair, and profound hope, interwoven in complex combinations, exists today. Men as individuals and in community are searching for answers to these problems.

There is need for the laity of the churches courageously to come to grips with the situation, as church members and as participants in culture. There is a reluctance to do this in any meaningful and comprehensive way, a reluctance engendered by a combination of circumstances, including fear and frustration. Frustration is created by the very magnitude of the problem, and fear because of a natural reluctance to tamper with existent forms. The present tendency for the clergy to be prophetic and the laity orthodox is dangerous in that it tends to widen the already existent gap between them. This hampers the development of the concept of the laos, or total church, united together for witness. If the prophetic and Protestant concept of Christianity can be grasped by laymen, if the absoluteness of agape can be known, and

if the necessity of incompleteness and ambiguity of all doctrines and forms of religion and culture can be accepted, then they will find courage to think and act in a creative manner, looking to the renewal of the church, and hence to the salvation of society.

As this study is being made it is done in the belief that a time of kairos is approaching, a time of opportunity for the church to find renewal. The widespread manifestations of many forms of disintegration and signs of revolt, as outlined earlier, will suggest both great danger and great promise for the future of man. The tentative efforts at reconstruction both outside the churches and within them are hopeful signs. But it is clear that if Protestantism is to play a prophetic and creative role in the new situation it must effect a break and a transformation as disruptive and as boldly revolutionary as the changes made at the beginning of the present era.

What is called for is the faith and courage of the New Testament Christianity, represented by the New Creation, grounded in agape, the ground of all virtue and justice. Religion is more than emotion and a set of rites and symbols, related, in some way, to a highest being. Religion is ultimate concern - it is the state of being grasped by something unconditional, holy and absolute, and of response to it.

In the following pages a series of subjects relating to belief and practice will be discussed, with reference to the foregoing considerations, and drawing upon the depth, the courage and the flexibility of Tillich's thought. Proposals will be offered in the hope that they may prove helpful in freeing the mind and spirit, which are so often held in bondage to the dictates of established doctrine, and so often

imprisoned by the hoary encrustations of dogma and tradition. If the mind and spirit can be freed from the fear of questioning man-made and finite forms, they will be released to be grasped by an ultimate concern.

I. FROM STATIC DOCTRINE TO DYNAMIC FAITH

The area of doctrine provides an important key to the renewal of the church. At one and the same time it claims first priority as a prerequisite for growth, and poses the most serious obstacle. Doctrine tends to become frozen in static molds and to resist change, to any significant degree. An element of doctrine learned in youth becomes a dogma, later transmitted in unaltered form to a new generation, crystallized by the various influences of tradition, custom, hierarchical pressures and psychological reasons.

Among these reasons two important ones stand out, the recognition of which is relevant to this study. The first is the identification of the "finite" with the "infinite", that is to say, the mistaken identification of the symbol, the doctrine, the institution, with that to which it points. The words of the Bible, regarded in an unimaginative, literal way, are equated with the "Word" of God, rather than seen as imperfect vehicles for the impartation of truth. There are many such examples which could be cited, which would all make the same point, namely the fact of the "idolatrous absolutization of the conditioned", which situation then prevents the movement beyond that point spiritually.

The second such reason is the tendency to freeze the present

into eternity. That which is now, is what must be always. This attitude is adopted by many people today, notwithstanding the fact that history shows continual change and development in the area of doctrine.

As an approach to the first of these problems, the absolutization of the finite, an acceptance of the implications of the Protestant principle can be seen as the logical answer. Any belief, any doctrine that is placed before the ultimate criterion, or that aspect of the ultimate criterion that applies to it, is seen to be but a partial and imperfect reflection of the perfect, and therefore unworthy of idolatrous devotion. The supreme standard of agape, as it is applied to the existence of any religious form or institution, or as it is applied to the life of the koinonia or the individual, exposes the degree of imperfection in them. This is an application of the method of correlation, whereby the light of love is enabled to convict, to purge and to redeem within the range of present possibility.

In regard to the second problem, the parochialism of temporality, the problem consists of being a prisoner of one's own time. A sense and a knowledge of history would show the temporality of all the forms of doctrine and practice, as well as their relation to the times in which they were born. It is proposed that laymen be introduced to the study of this aspect of church history, not with regard to knowledge of the facts alone, but, more importantly, with regard to an appreciation of the process of growth.

A knowledge of the development of doctrine, for instance, during the early Christian period, including the ecumenical councils, would show the results of responsible dialogue and creative controversy.

It would show that the beliefs now cherished as "eternal" were hammered out by the process of heated debate until, as Tillich says, "a final Yes is found in response to many No's". It would show, finally and perhaps most importantly, that the believer has not only the right, but also the duty, to challenge accepted beliefs on the grounds of his ultimate concern. Because of the very nature of religion, and because of the ignorance of the way in which doctrine is developed, the average churchman, even though he may harbor secret doubts, is fearful of the consequences of voicing them or of proposing more adequate formulations. If this fear can be allayed by education the way will be opened for wider participation in the area of doctrinal study, with participation by laymen bringing a new dimension.

A similar situation exists in relation to the canon of the scriptures. The Bible is often regarded with an unreasonable and superstitious reverence because of the subject with which it deals and because of a lack of knowledge of its history. Even among "liberals" the liberalism is often of an unsophisticated kind, based on a humanistic approach to religion. Those who wish to "interpret" the words of the Bible frequently do so on the basis of what they would like to believe rather than on the basis of the message the Bible brings, which approach is a perversion of liberalism. If these people, as well as the conservatives, could know the religious world of the Bible times, in the individual as well as in the social aspect, and could be acquainted with the process by which the writings were created and collected, and could understand the lengthy and involved process by which the canon finally came to be accepted, they would see the Bible in a new way. Then,

having an understanding of the part that human intelligence has played in the past in the development and interpretation of the scriptures they would be much bolder in their use of the Bible today.

The state of the church is likewise envisioned as a once-for-all standard, or pattern, whose structure, ritual and activity must be kept inviolate. It is customary to regard the form of the present or of the immediate past as the ultimate form, above criticism, and immutable. A study of church history will have the effect of showing the ceaseless process of change and development which has characterized the church since its inception, as well as the wide extremes of variety existing within the churches of today, when considered interdenominationally and internationally. The fact that there is no "right" form or pattern or program, but that all such are relative to the ultimate standard and to the situation in which they exist, will become evident. The fact that the church has divided and united, grown and declined, changed and developed, and that in spite of this has remained in existence, will show that the church need not be static. Even more important than this, the recognition of the fact that men, under the power of an ultimate concern, have been the agents for every kind of change, will embolden men of today who feel that the church must be renewed, but who are fearful to do more than make tentative gestures in that direction. Revelation, in the Christian sense, is present when men exercise the Protestant principle in prophetic judgment on the forms of culture and religion. The Christian judgment is that in times of human reception revelation is present, not merely as one revelation among others, but as the criterion of all other revelations, past and future. As men can,

in courage and faith, allow themselves to be grasped by the unconditional, they will see that all finite forms are subject to an infinite process of refinement in relation to that unconditional claim. "The unconditional claim made by Christianity is not related to the Christian Church, but to the event on which the church is based."¹

This leads to a consideration of the meaning and place of Christian faith in relation to static and dynamic doctrine. What is called for is a large and adequate faith, not one that is constricted and related to that which is finite. Tillich has many illustrations of what faith is not, some of which will be helpful at this particular point in this study:

Faith is not an act of knowledge that has a low degree of evidence.²

The dimension of faith is not the dimension of science, history, or psychology.³

Faith is not mere feeling - faith as the state of ultimate concern claims the whole man and cannot be restricted to the subjectivity of mere feeling.⁴

Faith is not the will to believe - no command to believe and no will to believe can create faith.⁵

(Faith is not) belief in something unbelievable, as the subjection to an authority which we trust, or as the risk of accepting something as highly probable but not certain.⁶

¹Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), p. 41.

²Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, (New York: Harper & Bros., 1957), p. 31.

³Ibid., p. 33.

⁴Ibid., p. 39.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Paul Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), p. 52.

Faith, then, is not an act of will, or intellect, or emotion alone, but

Faith, in the biblical view, is an act of the whole personality. Will, knowledge and emotion participate in it. It is an act of self-surrender, of obedience, of assent. Each of these elements must be present.⁷

Faith is a matter of infinite interest; it is the state of being grasped by the ultimate concern. The man who asks the question of ultimate reality and the man who is in a state of faith are equal with respect to the unconditional character of their concern.⁸

To the question of whether criticism or doubt are symptoms of unbelief and therefore to be denied, or whether they are destructive of faith, Tillich answers:

Faith contains a contingent element and demands a risk. It combines the ontological certainty of the Unconditioned with uncertainty of everything conditional and concrete . . . the risk of faith is based on a foundation which is not risk.⁹

Faith is the continuous tension between itself and the doubt within itself.¹⁰

Faith embraces itself and the doubt about itself.¹¹

Existential doubt and faith are poles of the same reality, the state of ultimate concern.¹²

Serious doubt is confirmation of faith. It vindicates the seriousness of ultimate concern, its unconditional character.¹³

The above quotations are offered to illustrate a way of thinking which is basic to the thesis of this study, and which is basic to

⁷Ibid., p. 53.

⁸Ibid., p. 58.

⁹Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 28.

¹⁰Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 60.

¹¹Ibid., p. 61.

¹²Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 22.

¹³Ibid., p. 58.

Tillich: the absolutely unconditioned quality of God, and the completely conditioned quality of all else. The finite is judged by the infinite. In every human situation the achievements of man, in whatever realm they may be, are held up to the judgments of God, not only in a negative but also in a positive way. It may be likened to the Old Testament prophet's illustration of the plumb line, the builder's tool, to the standard of which all elements of the building must conform. The plumb line serves not only to expose the irregularities of the construction, but also provides a guideline to which the construction will conform and be true.

A somewhat unusual but not irrelevant application of the often quoted prayer may help to illustrate this principle in another way: "O Lord, give me courage to change what can be changed, grace to accept what cannot be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference." What cannot be changed is the Ultimate, God in his love. What can be changed are the cultural and religious forms which have grown up as imperfect vehicles or manifestations of his love. Tillich makes this distinction very clear in the following words:

In true faith the ultimate concern is a concern about the truly ultimate; while in idolatrous faith preliminary, finite realities are elevated to the rank of ultimacy.¹⁴

Jesus' words to Nicodemus, "You must be born again", are translated into the phrase, "You must be grasped by ultimate concern." In each case the giving birth or the grasping is not an act of will, intellect or emotion initiated by the recipient, but is an act of God

¹⁴Ibid., p. 12.

which the recipient accepts. In each case also, it is a total, fundamental, ultimate act, not partial but complete, not temporal but permanent. This represents the centrality and stability of real Christian faith in a world of ambiguities and change. The acceptance of such a radical faith will erase fear in regard to the transitory and fragmentary character of the manifestations of that faith, making it possible to see them for what they are and to change them as needed, so that they may become more adequate bearers of ultimate meaning.

This is the Protestant principle in action. It recognizes the boundary character of all human life and work, and relates it to the ultimate in an attitude of prophetic protest and creative love. The recovery of the Protestant principle in the life of the Christian churches will restore to them their unique place as the leaven of love in a society of legalism.

II. FROM CULTURE CONFORMING TO CULTURE TRANSFORMING

Religion, in its Christian form, has exerted a great influence in the formation of western culture, as has been previously noted. The church, being dominant from the patristic era through the Middle Ages, made most significant contributions in the realms of faith, knowledge, education, welfare, medicine, social cohesion, politics. From within the ranks of the church came great leaders and pioneers in all walks of life and in all spheres of human endeavor who, in their religious and cultural involvement, laid the foundations of the society of the modern world. This was the positive contribution of the church through its involvement in society.

There was, as has also been noted above, a form of involvement which had negative consequences resulting from the juxtaposition of the rise of the capitalist society and the rise of Puritanism, leading to the positive and negative effects previously noted.

During both of these historic eras the church was actively involved in culture in a reciprocal relationship. At the present time, however, the situation has changed in that the capitalist society of today, as it is reflected in the political sphere, the economic sphere, and in the culture generally, is sufficient unto itself. It can, and does, function without benefit of religious criticism or inspiration.

Religion has become an irrelevancy in relation to the corporate structure of society, retaining a residual validity in the private sphere. Protestantism has, to a large degree, become the captive of the capitalist society, and hence reflects the value structure of that society. The prophetic element of Protestantism has been stifled, replaced by conformity.

The present time of unrest and existential revolt shows the need for the churches to reverse the trend of the past one hundred years, and to give expression again to the formative power that is inherent in Christianity. Now is a time when the double aspect of the Protestant principle can become effective once again - the spirit of protest in the light of the Christian concept of love and justice, and the spirit of re-creation from the same ground.

Once again it may be said that a knowledge of the Christian tradition of the past, and a deeper appreciation of the spiritual quality of the faith, will aid churchmen in appreciating the ethical

element in Christianity. It requires to be more widely realized that the present concept of the separation, not only of church and state, but of church and culture, is a modern phenomenon. The western world has witnessed a continuous retreat of the church from creative involvement in culture, with a progressively smaller area of effectiveness, to the point where, in the minds of many, it is almost completely irrelevant. Its creations, to which it has given birth in previous eras, and which it has nurtured, have assumed more and more authority in their own right. For instance, science, education, welfare, government, industry, all formerly participants in the religious enterprise, are now autonomous in their own right, interacting upon one another without reference to religion. Religion, finding itself reduced to the state of a vestigial organ in the body of society, has felt, until recently, that it has no alternative but to conform to the prevailing mores of society.

What is needed now is to realize that a new day has come, with new opportunities and new problems, as well as with new ways of approaching these new opportunities and new problems. The church cannot be the objective and determining power that it was in an earlier day; neither must it abdicate its position of influence and, by default, delegate all powers to the secular forms and ideologies.

The church will realize that, in spite of a large measure of adaptation to society and secular culture, it has preserved the message of an ultimate meaning of life, and that this is the unique and indispensable witness of the church. The church must then realize that its mission in the new day is to be in the spiritual and cultural vanguard.

The fact that the church must now, in the light of its new

situation, use spiritual and indirect means rather than physical and objective means to make its witness effective may, at first sight, appear as a handicap. But that just the opposite will be the case is the belief that is here being offered. To return to the concept of the borderline, it may be stated that, for Tillich, the church lives on the borderline. This it has not always been willing to do, but has regarded itself as the center, seeking to mold all culture to its image. The church has sought to be heteronomous and to exercise a unilateral influence. In the exercise of this belief the church has necessarily expressed itself by worldly means - it has secularized itself. In the process it has identified itself with its message, and has approximated what Tillich calls the "absolutization of the finite". The executive machinery of the institution and the objective manipulation of society have become ends in themselves, often standing between the individual and the experience of the spirit of reality.

The circumstances of modern life have manifested the falsity of this belief and the failure of this approach. If the churches are able to learn the lesson, a new day of influence will dawn for them. The events of the last fifty years have made man aware of the tenuousness of his existence and of the many respects in which he lives in a boundary situation. As Tillich says, "It is the awareness of the human 'boundary situation' or of the ultimate threat to human existence that prevents the modern man from surrendering to heteronomy."¹⁵ In his

¹⁵Paul Tillich, The Protestant Era, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948). p. 195.

realism modern man cannot accept the church as security, as was possible in a less sophisticated time of history. The real choice for the man of today is a difficult one. It lies neither in the radical acceptance of the secular situation nor in the surrender to the church, as alternative means of finding security in the face of the unconditioned threat. Both of these institutions, in their respective heteronomic expressions, offer a false security which is, ultimately, no security. The church on the other hand, in the spirit of the Protestant principle, offers a real threat and a real promise as anxiety and despair are met in and conquered by faith.

The church need not see its existence as an exercise in futility, nor need it conform to the value structure of capitalist society. If it can visualize itself as living in the boundary situation it will recognize its own imperfection as a finite form, which is nevertheless affected in a creative way by the Ultimate in whom it participates. Then it will see itself as the bearer, however imperfectly, of the spirit of love in the boundary situation in which it lives.

The church will seek spiritually, and often by very indirect means, using the method of correlation, to be the salt which brings a special flavor to all aspects of culture. By the exertion of a gentle pressure of prophetic criticism, by the positive witness of its own life as a fellowship, and by the deployment of its "new creatures" throughout the secular world, the church will find it possible to exert a more truly religious and more lasting force upon culture than was possible as a finite and objective institution. The church in a pluralistic society may not dominate or exercise objective control. Its

particular destiny is to bring the vertical dimension of faith into the horizontal dimension of culture.

The tragic situation of today is the culmination of a long history of religious and secular autonomies and heteronomies interacting upon one another. It is described as estrangement, alienation, revolt, which is to say that the problem is essentially a religious one. Having due regard to the other influences, it must yet be recognized that the present human and cultural situation of despair and anxiety is partly the result of the existence of a savorless Christianity - a Christianity marked by physical rather than spiritual standards, by justice rather than love, by fear rather than by faith.

The situation of today, in its spiritual sickness, offers the church an opportunity to live within culture in a truer way than it has ever been able to do before. Being both essentially and existentially at the boundary line of the horizontal and the vertical it can, by the method of correlation and by the exercise of grace, be an agency of the redeeming power of the New Creation, grounded in love, in a way that is at once both real and relevant. This can be effective not alone in the personal sphere, but equally so in the public sphere. The church need not either accept or reject culture as a final act. Its mission is to see it as a complex of ambiguous forms, and to set beside it the standard of the unambiguous.

III. FROM PERFECTIONISM AND WITHDRAWAL TO CREATIVE CASUISTRY

Acceptance of the foregoing remarks regarding the involvement of the church in its culture-transforming mission leads to a consideration of the concern about religious involvement in the corruption of secular life. There has long been a belief in Protestantism that worldly affairs were especially corrupted and contaminated by the forces of evil. The pleasures of the flesh, the acquisition of worldly goods, participation in secular politics not regulated by the church, were all looked at askance. The faithful strove for perfection, which in some respects led to asceticism and in some led to withdrawal.

Carried over into the realm of secular concerns, including business and politics, these areas were seen as unfit places for the churches, and sometimes also for churchmen, to be. The consequence was that the perfectionism of Protestantism led to an ineffectiveness in society. Politics is often considered to be unclean and dishonest, therefore the church and churchmen eschewed public service, so that politics was even less subject to the refining influence of religion. Business was also considered to be rough and inhuman, so that the church avoided any involvement in commercial affairs, and churchmen, when in business, avoided any contemplation about the religious and human aspects of their enterprises. This led to a dichotomy - the religious and the secular became two dissimilar and separate realms with but little communication between them. The perfectionism of the church effectively removed it from creative participation in an area of life in which its effect would have been most salutary.

What is needed, in order that churches and laymen may accept responsibility for the attempt at redemption of the secular world, is the realistic recognition of the ambiguity of every element of human life, including the religious as well as the secular. The world is full of "fragmentary anticipations of the Kingdom of God. The church itself is such a fragmentary anticipation."¹⁶ The necessarily ambiguous quality of all human motives, values, feelings and actions, when recognized as a universal state, will make understanding of the relation of religion and culture an easier matter.

For instance, the motives of the churchman who accepts the perfectionism of his church and religion are themselves of mixed character and lacking in ultimate purity. He is guided by a mixture of selfishness and altruism in his religious life, as his concern for personal salvation and his concept of Christian ethics may be viewed as opposites. His faith as a religious person, and fear of God's wrath and of personal tragedy, may also be seen as existing in a state of conflict. In the same way the contrast between his quality of life and what would be considered the ideal Christian life is quite obvious. If these and other ambiguities can exist side by side in the life of one Christian, it is not surprising that they also exist together in the life of the community.

The same analogy might be drawn of the church itself, which is a mixture of ambiguous motives, attitudes and actions, and which yet

¹⁶Paul Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 124.

survives and carries, with a degree of effectiveness, the Good News of the Kingdom.

In culture likewise, there are inequities, abuses, mixed motives, and actions which partake of both creative and destructive characteristics. The point to be noted is that in the churchman, in the church, and in society, there is not an entire absence of good, nor is there an entire absence of evil. There are always mixed elements in opposition and in polarity. Perhaps, rather than opposition, which carries the implication of negativism and destruction, the stress should be on the element of polarity, which carries the connotation of the positive and the constructive in creative tension. The Protestant principle is not dismayed by the evidence of polarity and tension, because it lives itself by these elements. In fact, that is its strength, in its essential being. It is Protestantism, as an existential form, having lost something of its critical and prophetic quality, and having assumed a rigidity of form and philosophy, which finds itself unable to work creatively with that which is ambiguous in its state of goodness. In this connection Tillich sees need for a reclamation of the truth of the Protestant principle in order for the church again to become effective:

Protestantism as a church for the masses can continue to exist only if it succeeds in undergoing a fundamental change Protestantism can draw on certain resources which are inaccessible to every form of Catholicism, i.e., the power of dealing with the secular world The most important contribution of Protestantism

to the world in the past, present, and future is the principle of prophetic protest against every power which claims divine character for itself.¹⁷

In making the approach to this problem it is of first importance to recognize the value of the "possible", that is to say, to recognize first, that the perfect can be only partially achieved, and second, that there is definite value in partial achievement. It is realistic to realize that when a religious dynamic essentially participating in the infinite but existentially also participating in the finite, makes juncture with a secular dynamic essentially concerned with the finite, but with some participation in the infinite, there cannot come about a perfect blending of the dimensions of the vertical and the horizontal. It will be a fragmentary and ambiguous blend, but the blend will be the more perfect because of the involvement of that dynamic which is primarily motivated by love.

The church itself is an existential actualization of the spirit of love, and because it is in existence, and subject to all the hazards of finitude, it is ambiguous in its witness. But because it is grounded in agape it has, and will continue to have, capabilities of creative power that are unknown to other finite structures. The same remarks apply to society in that, to whatever extent society reflects the infinite and knows itself to be grounded in the infinite, to that extent it approaches the perfect.

Of great aid to churchmen in approaching the problem of involvement in society would be a study of the relation between

¹⁷Tillich, The Protestant Era, pp. 229f.

Christian conscience and creative compromise, as has been suggested by Edward LeRoy Long, Jr.¹⁸ In its cultural involvement the Protestant conscience is hampered by its inheritance of Puritanism, with its tendency to see things in fixed patterns of good or evil, with its implications of predestination, and with its dichotomy of church and society. Because of this the Protestant churchman finds himself unable to enter into a creative relationship with the secular world. He is conditioned by the Puritan heritage to respect the church when it "preaches the Gospel" but does not seek to enter the forbidden areas of secular concern; he believes that the world cannot be made perfect, and is hence discouraged from attempting any degree of improvement; and he is fearful that by involvement he and the church might take upon themselves some of the unrighteousness of the world. But, an appreciation of the value of progress, however slight, will provide an incentive for coming to grips with problems. An appreciation of the interacting effect of social evils on all of society, including the church, will also provide an incentive to participate. And some understanding of the interrelatedness of all the elements of society, with the consequent necessity of sophisticated action, will encourage him to devote his talents to the betterment of society.

The church may be said to have three roles in society, according to the Protestant principle. The first of these is that of the conscience of society. The church, not motivated by self-interest, can

¹⁸Edward LeRoy Long, Jr., Conscience and Compromise (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1954).

stand above the secular struggles for power, prestige, wealth and security, and hold aloft the light and standard of agape, which proceeds from the Absolute. On this authority the church utters its prophetic protest.

The second role is that of the mediator of the grace of God, which is the saving and re-creating power. By the method of correlation all the works of men are correlated with the works of God, so that there is always in evidence a standard of infinite goodness by which men are judged and through which they are granted a purer vision. This standard is always in correlation with the existential situation of man and the absoluteness of the infinite.

The third role is that of the leaven, as, through the lives of those who are "participating in the New Being", and through its own life and witness the healing power of love is experienced. As churchmen are encouraged to express their faith by their words and actions in all spheres of life, the recreating power of the spirit will be made manifest.

One other aspect of this question remains to be discussed in this chapter. This is the relation of love and justice. The misinterpretations of both love and justice are manifold, and prevent a harmonious and creative correlation of these two polaric principles. Love needs to be considered from its Christian quality as agape, as well as in relation to love as philia and eros, in order to grasp the relationship of the vertical and the horizontal dimensions. In addition to this, love must be considered in dynamic relation to justice. If, using Tillich's formulation, it be accepted that love is

the foundation of justice, while justice is the expression of love, the dynamic relation can be seen at work. This formulation removes from justice its abstract and final character, thus divesting it of some of its autonomy, but at the same time it elevates justice to a level of creativity that blind justice does not possess.

Love does not do more than justice demands, but love is the ultimate principle of justice. Love re-unites; justice preserves what is to be united. Justice is the form in which and through which love performs its work. Justice in its ultimate meaning is creative justice, and creative justice is the form of re-uniting love.¹⁹

One might say that justice is existential and finite, while love is essential and infinite, which would mean that justice is always ambiguous, an approximation to what would ideally be the expression of love. Hence, by the method of correlation, the relative perfection of justice can be seen and a greater perfection can be sought. If the churchman, experiencing the absoluteness of love, and realizing the existential condition of justice, can then understand the necessarily ambiguous quality of justice in any human situation, he will then be in a position to make a creative approach to the problem. With love as the norm he will be able to realize the necessity of finite imperfection and the possibility of more adequate actualization of love in the future. In the finite fulfillment of love in justice, Tillich offers four principles which have value as guidelines at this point:

1. Adequacy: The form must be adequate and appropriate to the content.

¹⁹Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 71.

2. Equality: The differences in people are seen as functional, and not as ontological.
3. Personality: People are regarded as persons, rather than as things.
4. Freedom: The person has an essential superiority over enslaving conditions in the external world. Liberty is considered to be an essential principle of justice because the freedom of political and cultural self-determination is seen as an essential element of personal existence.²⁰

A Christian interpretation of personality as expressed in the relation of love and justice will lead, further, to the appreciation of the "I - Thou" relationship, and the relation of individual and community, for it is in personal encounter that man becomes man. It is only by meeting a "thou" that man realizes that he is an "I". An injury to the other is an injury to oneself, and an injury to oneself is an injury to the other. This is another illustration of the creative tension between love and justice, and a further justification for serious concern that the tension be kept positively alive.

IV. FROM INSTITUTIONALISM TO MISSION

One of the lessons which history teaches is the persistent tendency toward institutionalism, prevalent not only in churches but in all other forms of human corporate enterprise. The other lesson to be

²⁰Ibid., pp. 57-61.

learned, this time from the New Testament, is the error of this way. The change from institutionalism to mission would be a radical change which would have far-reaching effects on both the church and culture.

The great periods of the church have been marked by a revolution of this type which resulted in renewal, both of the church and of society. The two most outstanding examples of this are, of course, the birth of the Christian church and the Reformation, both of which were prepared for by the existence of an institutionalized church of great power, and both of which were marked by a breakthrough of the spirit.

The situation of today is different, in that there is not one great church, but it is similar in that to a very great extent the church has become an end rather than a means. Statistics need not be cited, for it is well known that the vast majority of time, effort, knowledge and money is devoted to the maintenance of the institution. The church has become, in Tillich's words, an absolutization of the finite, which causes it to be regarded as the fulfillment of God's purpose.

This causes the church to be regarded with an idolatrous concern, in the context of the prophets, who castigated the men of their time for worshipping the creations of their own hands, and neglecting that which the Lord desired of them - the expression of love and justice. It will be helpful at this point to give some consideration to the reasons for the existence of this problem.

The church is peculiarly susceptible to the form of corruption, for two reasons. First, the church as distinct from other institutions

in which man has a part, does have a participating relation with the infinite. As a symbol, it participates in the reality which it symbolizes. Given the natural awe and wonder of man when he contemplates the holy, given the mixture of fear and faith with which he contemplates the facts of life and death, given the place which the church occupies with relation to the rites and sacraments, and given the tradition of religious validity, it is not surprising that men regard the church itself with more than ordinary respect, which at times verges on the idolatrous.

Second, the church is that in which man himself becomes actively involved, or, to say this in another way, is something of which he becomes a part, and which becomes a part of him. The church is visible as a building into which goes man's skill, labor, money and devotion, which must first be constructed and then maintained. The church is visible as an institution which must have a congregation, supporters and leaders; it must have legal status and organization; it must be made functional in many ways, all of which lead to a process of identification of the individual with the institution.

It appears to be inevitable that, in the course of time, the institution acquires a character of sacredness and objectivity, which causes the labors of the faithful to be directed toward the maintenance of the physical and spiritual health of the institution as an institution. This was the case with Judaism and Catholicism, and is now becoming the case with large segments of Protestantism. As this happens, as more attention is directed to the welfare of the institution, less is necessarily directed to the mission of the church as the

carrier of the Gospel "to all men".

This process is self-defeating, as Paul pointed out in his Corinthian letter in reference to the partisanship of the people, some being "of Cephas" and some being "of Paul", whereas neither was ultimately important, but only Christ. This is the first element of self-defeatism - the fact that when the church stands too high it hides God. The church exists to bring men into a living and personal relationship with God, but if it usurps the place of God then its purpose is defeated. It is unfortunate that, in the concern with the personal affairs of the church, many people are denied the opportunity of experiencing the grace of God. Hence, not knowing in any real way of the Father and son relationship of themselves and God, they simply remain impersonal. This is not only a tragedy in a personal sense; it is a tragedy in a community sense.

This leads to the second way in which the process of institutionalism is self-defeating - the loss of communication with the secular community. For one thing, the churchman who, by idolatrous concentration upon an objective form, is prevented from realizing his own personhood as a child of God, is likewise unable to see others as persons. If one does not know and truly love oneself one cannot love one's neighbor as oneself in a Christian way. The person in both cases is lost. For another thing, on the horizontal dimension, the institution which absorbs all the time and attention of its people then stands between them and their neighbors as a preventative to human understanding.

Fidelity to the Protestant principle would show the fallacy of

undue devotion to a finite form, and unfounded expectations of growth from the mere fact of its objective presence. The Protestant principle deprecates the efficacy of works to effect justification.

The central principle of Protestantism is the doctrine of justification by grace alone, which means that no individual and no human group can claim a divine dignity for its moral achievements, for its sacred power, for its sanctity, or for its doctrines . . . It implies that there cannot be a sacred system, ecclesiastical or political; that there cannot be a sacred hierarchy with absolute authority; and that there cannot be a truth in human minds which is divine truth in itself.²¹

Another aspect of the means and ends problem involves the position of the church in society, in which the church may be said to regard society as a means to an end - the preservation of ecclesiology. The Hebraic concept of the "Chosen People" is all too frequently misinterpreted to give it the connotation of the privileged people, with the result that the church regards as its due the loyalty and support of society. The prevalence of this attitude is illustrated in the favored position the church seeks to assume within culture, in the form of tax benefits and special favors for the institution and its personnel. It is reflected in the censorship which the church seeks to impose on books, movies, or other art forms. It is shown in the resistance the church mounts against legislation which may have the aim of liberalization of the "blue laws". And it manifests itself in a continuing campaign of censure against encroaching "secularism" of many and variant forms. The church finds it difficult to accept the fact that it exists in a pluralistic society in which the competition for the attention of

²¹Tillich, The Protestant Era. p. 226.

the public is very keen, and in which it is not automatically accorded respect, but must prove to be deserving of it. The activities of censorship and restriction of activities often have mixed motives, the overt and legitimate concern for the welfare and protection of society, and the covert concern for the welfare and protection of the institution. The church is sometimes disconcertingly arrogant and callous in respect to its relations to society, which fact causes disillusionment and bitterness among men of the secular world.

At the opposite pole is the conception of the church as the servant of humanity, expressing the true meaning of the phrase, the "chosen people", which is, chosen to serve and to bring light and life. What is required in the form of renewal in this respect is a re-dedication of the church to the original call of Christ to his disciples, to become fishers of men. As this subject is being considered it should be stated first that this does not bring with it the implication of the denial of the self. The two dimensions of the horizontal and the vertical must again be kept in mind in a consideration of the concept of mission. As it was with the disciples of Jesus who, though called to serve others yet were required to spend much time with Jesus, so it is with the witness of today who, though chosen to be the mediator of the Good News, must spend much time in spiritual communion with God. He who would teach must first be taught; he who would heal must first be healed; he who would save must first be saved; he who would love must first be loved. This conjunction of the active and the passive voices in the verbs of religion distinguish the full meaning of Christian from the partial.

One form of the partial, rather commonly observed, is the individualistic, which sees religion as a means to individual salvation and personal glory. It is a natural desire to find justification for one's own life. This motive cannot be repudiated, but neither can it be considered as a complete fulfillment of Christianity.

The other form of the partial, to which the churchman may legitimately object, is the concern for human welfare, which sees religion only as a form of social service. The sensitive layman who objects to this kind of religious involvement in society is sometimes castigated by the clergy for the lack of a "sense of mission", and frequently carries a sense of guilt because of his own sense of lack in this respect.

If it can be understood that the two are not separate, nor are they complete individually and in isolation, a step will be taken toward a more adequate understanding of the role of the church in mission. The church lives in society. It draws from society and in turn gives back to society. In the same way society draws from and gives to the church. The church lives principally in the dimension of the horizontal. If the two dimensions can intersect at every point and at every level a meaningful and creative correlation will be established between religion, which is the "substance of culture" and culture which is the "form of religion".

This will aid the churchman in knowing that even as he is called to present himself for renewal by the spirit of a New Creation, so is he called to mediate, within the range of the possible, that same spirit of renewal. The two callings are not antagonistic; they are two

sides of the same concern. In the same way this understanding will aid him in understanding the necessity of bringing the two dimensions, the vertical and the horizontal, into conjunction at every point in his own life, as well as in the life of society. The method of correlation brings into relation the standard of the absolute and the situation of the relative.

V. FROM PHARISAIC EXCLUSIVISM TO PARTICIPATION

Another aspect of the question under discussion concerns the problem of Pharisaism and exclusivism arising out of preoccupation with the validity of one's own orientation to the Absolute. The problem has to do with the attitude of provincialism, which is a universal weakness. Tillich makes personal reference to this in his autobiographical notes, alluding to the German manifestations of provincialism in the intellectual field in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the opinion of German thinkers of that era, human thought had reached its apogee in Germany, and what was not German was of little value. Tillich, and other Germans, when exposed to modes of thought other than the German, came to realize not only the inadequacies but also the dangers of a purely Germanic way of thinking.

The illustration applies fittingly to religion. There develops a natural tendency to regard the church as the sole recipient and repository of religious truth because of its long association with the affairs of religion. The church develops parochialism in that it becomes pre-occupied with itself, its teachings and its customs, which are all oriented toward "religion" in a way not common to secular orders

of society. The church and church people become professional, skilled in the reception of truth, at ease in the handling of it, and adept in its dissemination. It follows, then, that a people more knowledgeable about religion than the general public are correspondingly more practiced at doing the truth - in other words, are more righteous.

To be sure, the church, living for the sole purpose of establishing the community of the faithful, and providing an environment favorable to communication between God and man, can be presumed to stand in closer relation to absolute truth than can the normal secular institution. Likewise the participant in the life of the religious community can be expected to experience in fuller measure the presence of agape than can the person who is not so participating. But notwithstanding these advantages possessed by the church, it cannot be assumed that there is not some degree of imperfection present in the church as an institution, and in the faith and life of its individual members.

The church rests its claim to perfection on the fact of revelation - the perfect Word of God given to man. This is claimed to be complete and infallible because its source is God, in contrast to the partial and ambiguous body of knowledge obtained by human media. The church on that account regards itself as superior to other finite institutions. But lest the church assume unwarranted ultimacy it must be recalled that even though revelation be perfect it requires reception and interpretation by finite personalities and finite means, within the realm of culture which itself is finite. Revelation must become theology to become effective, thus leading to the possibility of error, for revelation is directed from God to man, whereas theology is directed

from man to God. There is no perfect theology and no perfect church.

The Protestant principle requires that the church not become an "absolutization of the finite", which it is tempted to do, because that is a contradiction in terms. The finite is always enmeshed in existential ambiguity and must always remain so, never taking on to itself finality or ultimacy. In contrast to the spirit of Pharisaism, with its arrogant assumption of perfection, the Protestant principle, by exercising prophetic judgment upon the life and belief of the church, encourages a humility of spirit akin to that of the man who, entering the temple, stood afar off and prayed for forgiveness. The Protestant principle, in its positive manifestation, exercises a renewing and purifying influence on the church which seeks, by the method of correlation, to relate itself to the New Creation. It lives always in creative tension, experiencing both protest and renewal. The Protestant principle affirms that

Just as there is no priest having a specifically religious function, for everybody is a layman and every layman potentially a priest, so there is no religion as a specifically spiritual sphere. Everything is secular, and every secular thing is potentially spiritual.²²

This leads to a consideration of the religious concern in secular society. It is maintained, as a presupposition for the purpose of this study, that there is an ultimate concern expressed in secular society, which concern is expressed, not in specifically religious terminology and actions, but indirectly and through various humanitarian concerns.

The concern for the improvement of man's lot is a manifestation

²²Ibid., p. 174.

of ultimate concern, in that it expresses a recognition of destiny, in contrast to fate. Man's destiny is to search, to achieve, to justify, to create, to realize his potentiality as a person, in contrast to the creaturely world, whose fate is to exist in its place as given. Insofar as man is in this way true to his destiny he is expressing ultimate concern, which is to say, he is religious.

The search for knowledge is another example of a religious urge in man. The scientist, seeking to know and to apply the laws of God, knows there is something in the universe to get hold of, just as the man of religion knows there is something in the universe he can get hold of. They are each reaching for some aspect of God's truth of love. The search for knowledge rests on the ground of belief that God's world is orderly, and that knowledge is basically one. In searching for knowledge the seeker is basically striving to know God who is truth.

The many forms of cooperation between men, in the areas of labor, knowledge, education, arts, community, and politics, are implicit acknowledgements of the fact that man is not created to live alone but in community, which is a religious insight. To be sure, there are many elements of self-interest in all associations, but this is balanced by the element of unity of purpose in such associations. Motives in all human affairs are mixed, and this is no exception. The concept of the United Nations is an example of a combination of self-interest and altruism, as nations of the world have banded together with the avowed intent of waging the peace, for all men, everywhere. This example can be matched by many others, great and small, in all parts of the world, in which some relation to an ultimate concern is manifest.

The latent church is a concept of which Tillich speaks with understanding and sympathy as being the modern expression of much of what the church has traditionally made its concern. Many who would in other times have expressed their spiritual and humanitarian concerns through the medium of the church are now on the borderline between church and society. Through many types of private, governmental and commercial groups they find a relatively adequate opportunity to engage in the works of compassion and to develop their concepts of ethics-activities that formerly were considered to be the province of the church, and were left for the attention of the church.

A further reason for the emergence of the boundary man is the growing sophistication of people. This enables them to evaluate with more critical acumen the situation of the churches in relation to society, as regards the degree of their relation to the ultimate. It becomes apparent to such observers that the difference in spirituality and practical ethics between the church and secular associations is often not so much one of quality as of quantity, and furthermore, that both forms have mixtures of motives and actions within them. The result is that the church has lost its position of infallible spokesman for God and of exclusive mediator of his love.

Having considered the problem of self-righteousness as a deficiency of the church, and having followed this by a consideration of the universality of an ultimate concern, it now remains to consider the approach of the church to the new situation. There are those who believe that the church, in the face of advancing secularism, should militantly assert itself as the only true repository of the truth and

the love of God and as the only authentic mediator of these qualities to men in the world. In other words it should, not for its own good but for the ultimate good of men, assume as much heteronomy as possible. On the other hand there are those who, existentially estranged and religiously disillusioned, seeing the relativities and ambiguities of the church, and swayed by the assumed competency of the secular world, feel that the church is no longer relevant and should be eliminated.

The thesis of the present study is that the Protestant principle, expressing itself in and through the churches in a form of continual criticism and renewal, is vitally necessary for the renewal of men in community today.

Radical criticism and creative witness in respect to every moment of the life of the church, every belief, every pronouncement, every policy formulation, every action - all in relation to the ultimate criterion of the "New Creation" which is the foundation of the Christian church, as well as in relation to the existential situation of men and society - will render the church vital and relevant. There is no secular power or form that is adequate to the task that is in the present day given to the church. Only the church, correlated with the Ground of Being, and realistically related to man in existence, has the power of interpreting ultimate meaning, and thus saving man from total alienation and utter meaninglessness. As Tillich puts it, "Protestant formative power is needed in a secular world; and it is at work wherever the autonomous forms become bearers of the ultimate meaning."²³

²³Ibid., p. 221.

At this point the church can properly recognize that through the vast accumulation of religious reference, and because of its intimate connection and concern with the development of the "I - Thou" relationship over the entire course of history, it has a position of authority in the religious sphere that cannot realistically be challenged. The focal point of the historical and universal activity of the church has been the concern of communication between person and Person, and the finding of self in the community of selves. This is a task of cosmic proportions that cannot properly be delegated to any other existent form that has other primary functions. Only the church can do it, and only the renewed church can do it in the present day.

A second thing the church must realize is its position of finiteness, temporality and ambiguity. To be effective in the present age the church must be fully cognizant of its shortcomings as an existent form. Then it must be ready always to seek renewed revelation that may be translated into theology and ethics, and it must be ready to accept criticism from the world that may, in turn, be evaluated in respect to revelation.

If the church will allow itself to stand in a situation of continual criticism and renewal along the vertical dimension, correlated with the situation of continual criticism and renewal along the horizontal dimension it will find itself standing at the intersection of the dimensions, at the critical point where renewal is possible for the church, for the individual, and for culture.

Today there are many people who have become aware of their human existence in such a way that they ask the question to which we can give the answer. In following this method we follow the lead of the

beatitudes. There Jesus always points to the situation in which people are and in which they ask for the Kingdom of God. It is then that they can understand the answer, and hence are blest.²⁴

VI. FROM REPRESSION TO LIBERATION

This section will deal with the problem of extreme asceticism and repression in Protestantism and will seek to provide a justification for a more liberal attitude in respect to the personal life.

As has been mentioned earlier, much of religion, not only in primitive but also in western Christianity, is rooted in fear, and has a negative character. Resistance to the pursuit of knowledge, as in the sciences of astronomy, physics and biology was rooted in the fear of tampering with God's revealed truth; modern researches in medicine have been opposed because of the fear of opposing God's will; and the educational and social sciences have met with resistance for religious reasons based on the fear of angering God.

Much of the myth and ritual, not only of religions such as those of the ancient Near East and modern primitive forms, but also of modern Christianity, have arisen from the fear of retribution by an angry God as punishment for human sinfulness, and with the hope of placating him by the correct performance of rites and duties. Many of the restrictive regulations placed upon modern followers of Christianity - matters relating to dress, entertainment, adornment, eating and drinking, Sabbath observance, and many other essentially non-religious concerns have been imposed out of fear of a judgmental God.

²⁴Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 207.

These and other restrictive practices have their origin in a philosophy of religious domination, in which the church was accorded the privilege and the authority to decide on the efficacy or the harmful effects of certain practices, and then to allow or prohibit their continuance. In the secular society of today the church, except in certain specific instances, does not have that power.

Men of today who may belong to a church with repressive codes will at the same time belong in a culture which is permissive. Such a man, if he takes his religion seriously, is faced with several unpleasant alternatives, the unpleasantness occasioned partly because of the discrepancies themselves and partly because he does not understand the reason for them. He may obey the ecclesiastical commands willingly, or he may obey them with hesitation and resentment while observing that others are not so compelled. He may disregard the injunctions and adopt the customs and habits of the society in which he lives, at the same time harboring an uneasy conscience. He may attempt to effect an uneasy truce between the demands of his church and the customs of society.

In each of these alternatives, although he may effect an outward accomodation both to religion and to society, there is an element of disturbance and questioning. On the one hand, many of the legalistic ecclesiastical regulations have lost their original meaning and value, and are retained as vestigial remnants of an earlier day. On the other hand secular society has, in some respects, reacted in an extreme way to the repressive elements in religion, moving past freedom into license. With the present lack of understanding of the roots of

morality on the part both of the church and of society, there is a destructive tension in existence between them.

Religion, "viewing with alarm", seeks by various means to arouse public opinion and to effect some sort of control over what it views as decadence, while society, viewing with disdain, seeks further to throw off the shackles of restraint. Communication fails and the situation worsens.

Part of the blame for the stalemate must be placed upon the churches who have followed the course of least resistance, which is legalism, in enforcing at least an outward and observable condition of morality. This is to be expected, since spiritual maturity is hard to come by, and individual ethical and moral judgments very difficult to make with validity. Since it is difficult to be sure that right attitudes of spirituality can be developed in the first place, and uncertain that right actions will follow if the right attitudes are developed, the other course has been adopted - that of requiring that the right acts be performed and the wrong acts be avoided, in the hope that right attitudes will be developed.

That this is an ineffective way of inducing righteousness was seen by the Old Testament prophets, by Jesus, by Paul, and later again by Luther, all of whom, in one way or another, protested against legalism and the doctrine of justification by works. It has been recognized by reformers of all ages that repressive legislation that does not result in conditions that come to be appreciatively viewed - that is, legislation that is unwise in the end sought from the perspective of the values of a particular culture - is ineffective in producing inward

morality. On the other hand, it must be conceded that legislation that results in social conditions that are more easily accepted in terms of important social predispositions, is indirectly effective in changing inner attitudes. What is required is not legislation which requires conformity to a "finite ultimate" which is enmeshed in the ambiguities which it seeks to surmount, but rather legislation which is an expression of a state of faith arising from the fact of being grasped by an ultimate concern.

The question now is, "how can the change from repression to liberation be effected?" The answer lies in the Christian understanding of God as the God of love, whose creative and liberating power transcends the law. Once again the concept of the Protestant principle may be used as an aid in evaluating the Christian concepts which are current, and the religious practices which are in vogue.

In transferring allegiance from the external, finite legalisms to the finite Absolute one comes under a higher law which does not bring a greater degree of repression but instead makes possible a greater realization of potentiality. It may be likened to being grasped by what Kant called the "categorical imperative", which is "nothing more than the 'ought to be', the moral commandment,"²⁵ "It is not a strange law, imposed on us, but it is the law of our own being."²⁶ The Protestant principle exalts this "law", which may be variously described as the "categorical imperative", the "law of our being", the "law of love", the "ought to be", all of which is to say that it is the way of truth.

²⁵Ibid., p. 135.

²⁶Ibid., p. 136.

If the "law of love" may be regarded as the inclusive term, to which the Protestant principle stands in relation, there is found a standard which is true to the nature of God, expressive of man's true character, and adequate to every situation.

Love is both absolute and relative by its very nature. An unchanging principle, it nevertheless always changes in its particular application. It 'listens' to the particular situation.²⁷

The discussion in this section of the study, since it is concerned with the liberation of the self, now requires to be directed toward the results of the governance by love rather than by restrictive legalism. It will be recognized that two things may be said about ecclesiastical legalism. First, laws and customs arise or are enacted out of concern for the self, its preservation and growth. They are not normally designed for their restrictive value alone, but out of the hope that by guidance and discipline the self may be aided in its development. Although laws may appear at times to be misguided in their conception and misused in their application, they are not fundamentally negative, but are positive in their aim. The second thing to be said about legalism is that it is finite, temporary, partial and ambiguous; as new truth is received and new conditions arise, old laws are superseded by new laws, which, in their turn are finite.

Therefore, having regard for the good intentions of the past, and the general acceptance of the present in regard to restrictive legalism, the individual and the group are justified in applying the

²⁷Paul Tillich, Morality and Beyond, (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 42.

creative criticism of the Protestant principle in regard to the future, seeking a more self-liberating spirit of morality which goes beyond law. For a blind acceptance of heteronomically imposed laws, and unreasoning conformity to custom, instead of freeing the person, destroys the self. It is only as one is grasped by the ultimate that one can experience justification.

This will enable the one so "grasped" to make more valid Christian decisions regarding the validity of restrictive ecclesiastical legalism, on the one hand, and permissive secular license, on the other, and by the method of correlation allow them to be held in judgment by the law of love. This approach will recognize the existence of beauty, of pleasure experienced by the senses, of the expression of the various forms of art, of the sensual and the physical, of play, and of community, and it will recognize the capacity and the right of man to appreciate them. Above all, it will see that, as symbolically expressed in Genesis, life is "good".

Viewing life in all its aspects of pleasure and achievement, from the point of view of the Protestant principle, the churchman will be able to apply the absolute standard to the relativities of life. This, of course, is not to suggest that a purely individual or subjective form of judgment is valid, without reference to the influence of the community of faith or even of society as a whole. The fact that man becomes truly man only in a community of persons, each of whom is at once free and responsible, is one that must always be kept in mind in respect to the renewal of the individual, the koinonia, and society.

VII. FROM RIGIDITY TO FLEXIBILITY IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A most important area of church life, and one in which renewal is greatly needed is the area of Christian education. There is need for a movement away from rigidity and lack of imagination in Christian nurture to a flexible and imaginative approach to this important task.

The philosophy that has obtained in the past, and which to a large extent still obtains, is that of indoctrination, in which a body of religious knowledge is given to the student to be learned and assimilated. This is done on the basis of a misinterpretation of the Socratic dictum that knowledge creates virtue, not taking into account the full meaning of the word "knowledge", and not taking into account the situation from which knowledge is imparted and in which it must be applied.

The teaching, to a large extent, has been "Bible centered", in that familiarity with a greater or less number of biblical "facts" is assumed to be adequate for the Christian. It is questionable whether this type of teaching can really be called Bible centered in regard to the existential situation in which the Bible was created and which can be of value in application.

The teaching, to a large extent, has also been doctrine centered, in the rigid and repressive way described in earlier sections, which assumes acceptance of the intellectual propositions of theology and the moral injunctions of ethics, without the opportunity for searching criticism and creative dialogue, and above all, without personal, existential involvement.

The teaching, to a large extent has been traditionally church centered, historically and contemporarily. With the aim of inculcating a knowledge of and respect for the institution as such, and with the hope of ensuring the continuance of participation in and support of its functions, this aspect of Christian teaching has loomed large. It includes indoctrination into habits of regular attendance at its services, financial support of its work, and personal contributions of time and effort; it includes training in the fact of the local church and its involvement with other institutions and denominational agencies; and it includes teaching of the missionary activities of the church.

All of these are good, but they are not enough; large areas of life which are properly the concern of Christian education are neglected. And if these teachings are imposed on one from above, as "sacred" teachings which are simply to be accepted, they do violence to the Christian understanding of man as a reasoning and responsive creature.

The reaction to this religious indoctrination, which has been described as Bible-Church centered, took place with the appreciation of the contribution which the various disciplines of psychology could offer in the entire educational field, religious and secular. This was accompanied by the rise of the spirit of liberalism in the churches.

The new approach was often described as "child-centered", meaning that the emotional, social, religious, intellectual, physical needs, and the total situation of the child were considered to be of first importance. Another factor was growth, development or maturation, an understanding of which was of value in planning courses of instruction

for children and young people of all ages. Yet another factor taken into consideration was the social or community situation, with the understanding of the necessity of adjustment to the facts and conditions of society as an element in personal development.

This philosophy of Christian education, moving in reaction from the more traditional, in its turn had negative and positive values. On the positive side, it released Christian education from the preoccupation with content and the neglect of the subject who was involved in the learning process; it brought release from the domination of the past and made possible an awareness of the dynamism of the present; and it brought Christian education from the realm of the abstract to the realm of the concrete.

But, on the negative side, there were serious deficiencies, from the point of view of the Christian doctrine of man. Content was, in extreme cases, seriously diluted; adjustment to the secular norms of society was a guiding principle; conformity with levels and standards hampered the expression of individuality; and, in a very real way, Christian education tended to become culture centered rather than child centered, stressing conformity with prevailing patterns and values of society. To a great extent the religious impact was lost.

These negative qualities of the "liberal" development of Christian education reflect, as individual items, a generalized attitude of conformity to the culture, which is a concern of fundamental importance to the theme of this study. It reflects another variation of the domination of the capitalist spirit, which is active in creating the character of the culture which exists in the western democracies.

It is another instance of the "cultural captivity of the churches", which is to say that it is something to be viewed with great concern by those who feel that Christianity has something to offer of a unique type, that transcends culture.

"Modernism" and "liberalism" in the churches, and particularly in Christian education, is being viewed with concern also by churches of the more conservative or orthodox belief. From this point of view the concern is expressed as a repudiation of liberalism and all the implications of a liberal philosophy, coupled with aggressive efforts to force a return to orthodoxy, in the hope that what are considered to be religious values will be preserved in the midst of an increasingly decadent society. However, considering these attempts from the point of view implicit in this study, it is seriously questioned whether such a return is possible, or even valid.

To turn now to the constructive portion of this section of the study, it appears that what is needed for the renewal of the churches in a manner that will be at once true to their foundation and relevant to today's world, as a new approach to the problem. An approach is called for that, while being firmly grounded, is yet flexible and imaginative. It may be contended that all systems of Christian Education have been deficient in respect to flexibility, in that a particular ideology has been dominant, whether it be Bible centered, child centered or culture centered.

Christian education must transcend both orthodoxy and liberalism and their particularities, being centered neither exclusively on the vertical dimension nor on the horizontal dimension, but at the point of

intersection in the existential situation. The Protestant principle, with its continuing criticism of the finite in the name of the infinite, may be the guiding principle, while the method of correlation will function in correlating the various elements. It is essential that no preconceived methods or ideologies be imposed on educational philosophy from without, but that it be allowed to develop in respect to the existential situation and the ultimate aims.

The prime aim, of course, is the growth of the person as a child of God. The realization of this goal will be best achieved not by a philosophy of Christian education that is God centered or child centered, but by one that is God-child centered (child implying the concept of self-in-community). It will involve continual interaction between the person and the spirit, in the context of the existential situation. The acquisition of knowledge will be one element in the total process, with the following qualifications - knowledge will be a means to an end rather than an end in itself, and knowledge is here understood in the Socratic sense rather than in the academic sense. For instance,

The Socratic assertion . . . that knowledge creates virtue must be interpreted as knowledge in which the whole person is involved (insight). That is, a cognitive act which is united with a moral act can cause further moral acts (and further cognition).²⁸

To a certain extent concepts related to the philosophy here advocated are being incorporated into new curricula of some Christian denominations. This is a creditable trend, however tentative it may be

²⁸Ibid., p. 58.

in some respects. A problem remains, however, in the ability of the average churchman to understand and accept such an existentialist philosophy of Christian education, because of its apparent departure from the traditional concepts of church and of Christian education. There is a natural fear of change as well as a sense of anxiety lest the church be deserting its primary religious orientation and adopting a secularism that will cause it to become indistinguishable from other institutions in society.

This problem provides the reason for being, and the point of departure for this study. Recognizing the problems of the relations of religion and society, the problems of the loss of self, the necessity for the renewal of the church as the only means of adequate personal and social renewal, and the fear and bewilderment of churchmen in relating to all these problems, the attempt is here being made to provide insight into the deeper meaning of church, as well as justification for radical and creative renewal with respect to the correlation of the temporal world with the eternal Gospel.

To come to grips with the actual problem of Christian education the church is first required to adopt a listening posture. It must listen to the voice of God as he speaks through all media specifically known as "religious" - the Scriptures, the church, religious history, religious writings and biographies, worship, searching for ever deeper meaning through prayer, and seeking to transcend the symbols and the media so as to have personal confrontation with and participation in the Holy which is thus symbolized and mediated. This is not to be regarded as something that will be accomplished at a point in time and

space, but as an ultimate goal that at best can be only partially reached. Christianity is not a destination but a journey, with new light breaking in at every point along the way.

The church, in regard to Christian education, must listen to the child in an honest way. Dr. Joseph Sittler Jr., in listening to children in the play ritual using such words as "mellafalugas, clackaduckaroos, and skimarookus", asks what the response of adults shall be to such language. He adds that the first, easiest and most natural response is to label it as nonsense, and the second is to say that it has meaning but that it is esoteric and subterranean, so that only a child may understand. But he favors a third response which says that

there is meaning here, known to the children, but also knowable by me; and if I try to understand it I shall both better understand the child and the residual and undefeatable child in myself. . . Now certainly the third option is the one the church ought to take if she would advance in understanding and love in this day. The children of this age are making peculiar noises - in music, in painting, in sculpture, in architecture, in prose and in verse, in drama and in quite new ways in philosophy and logic too.²⁹

The church must listen to society. Secular culture has much to say to the church, both implicitly and explicitly, both positively and negatively. Much of the glory of the church is seen reflected in the society of today, as is much of the shame of the church; if the church takes credit for that which is good in society, it must also assume some share of the blame for that which is bad. There are lessons to be learned by listening to society. The "strange noises" in art and in

²⁹Joseph Sittler, "The Church and the Arts", in Report of the Special Committee on the Council's Role in the Field of Religion, (New York: National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 1964), p. 27.

literature cannot be dismissed as simply the aberrations of deranged minds, but are often reflections of a universal state of malaise, and are sometimes expressions of sensitive souls in revolt against this very sickness.

Just as in the Gospel story our Lord said that sickness was "not unto death but that the glory of God might be revealed." So in all our human ways strange heavens of vision and accomplishment are formed in unbelievable hells.³⁰

As Tillich says, the great works in the modern art forms are often creative expressions of the destructive trends in contemporary culture.

The great works of the visual arts, of music, or poetry, of literature, of architecture, of dance, of philosophy, show in their style both the encounter with non-being, and the strength which can stand this encounter and shape it creatively.³¹

Turning now to the curricula and techniques that will be used in a program of Christian education that seeks a radical approach to the problem of the growth of human personality and the renewal of the church, it can be said that a thoroughgoing and drastic criticism, evaluation and re-appraisal of the approach is needed. This will include that most difficult area, the re-orientation of teachers in relation to an infinitely greater task than has been previously assigned to them. While it is not the province of this study to delve deeply into educational procedures, that being the work of specialists in the field, some further remarks are in order.

Given such a conception of religion and religious education as is being advocated here, it will be understood that everything in the human and finite world of knowledge, arts, religion and culture will

³⁰Ibid., p. 5.

³¹Tillich, Theology of Culture, pp. 46f.

be considered as usable in some form or other in the achievement of human selfhood. Nothing that is existent will be considered as absolute. Everything will be relative beside the one Absolute. This basic formulation of the relation of means to end, in itself gives freedom and allows imagination to function in place of the rigidity and lack of imagination of the past.

The aim in Christian education must be the basic one of the New Testament - the salvation of man in his totality, as a being. In Tillichian language it can be described as a faith that will transcend estrangement, and the courage that will transcend anxiety.

These two thoughts are not separate, but united in what Tillich calls the "courage to be". This is an ontological concept, with existential implications and involvements. In contrast to the traditional conception of religious training, this may be taken to have very radical implications.

It does not necessarily mean the courage to be religious; it may mean, in some circumstances, the courage not to be religious, if faith and truth are thought to be better served that way.

It does not necessarily mean the courage to be "normal"; it may mean, in some circumstances, the courage to reject the norms, if the exigencies of the situation demand such allegiance to freedom in the light of one's own destiny.

It does not necessarily mean the courage to be "patriotic"; it may mean the courage to answer to a higher call than that of country, if that is felt to be the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

It does not necessarily mean the courage to be anything at all,

according to objective categories. It is simply the courage to be, to participate in reality, grasped by an ultimate concern. This is the glory of human selfhood, living in yet transcending all existential anxiety by virtue of the grace of God expressed in the New Creation.

VIII. FROM COGNITIVE TO TOTAL RELIGIOUS PERCEPTION

Protestantism, as a form of Christianity, has laid great stress on the rational character of man, to the virtual exclusion of the other elements of his character. It is a contention of Emil Brunner that the heritage of Greek rationalism in the early years of the Christian era was responsible for the strong element of intellectualism in Christianity. This was undoubtedly a strong element in later Catholicism as it developed during the Middle Ages, but it was there united with other elements, the mystical and the symbolic, represented in monasticism and expressed in the mass.

Protestantism, arising during and following the years of the Renaissance, became very largely a religion of reason, and, as it broke away from Catholicism it also turned away from mysticism and symbolism except in very vestigial ways. The Age of Enlightenment gave man the use of his reason as an autonomous personality, free from the heteronomic domination of an all-powerful institution, which was a great advance in man's self-development, even though it did make possible the rise of a form of autonomy that would bring another kind of threat to the development of real self integration.

Protestantism thus became a religion of the Word, since the spoken and the written word are the adequate vehicle for the

transmission of rational thought. With the re-discovery of classical learning, the invention of printing, and the breaking away from the Catholic church with its extensive concern with non-rational elements the Protestant faith became heavily dependent on the preaching and the reading of the Word of God. The rational mind also found a natural affinity with law, so that the development of legalism was a natural outgrowth. These qualities, together with the emphasis on asceticism and industry, led Protestantism into a one-sided emphasis on the intellectual at the expense of the non-intellectual.

It is difficult for Protestants to understand their heritage in terms of the Puritan emphasis on asceticism, because of the present posture of the great majority of Anglo-Saxon Protestants today, in regard to the physical, emotional and aesthetic side of life, both in the secular sense and in the religious. The Puritan philosophy is lauded, whereas the more sensuously luxurious Catholic and Orthodox tradition is looked upon with suspicion. Rather than suspect that the Protestant faith may have lost something of the beauty and warmth of the sensual, the mystical and the symbolic, the Protestant feels that religion oversteps the bounds of propriety when it adds what are believed to be non-religious elements.

The relation of this aspect of Puritanism to the problems which have been discussed earlier are pointed out by Weber, who says that, in Puritanism, "asceticism descended like a frost." He also says,

³¹Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), p. 168.

"That powerful tendency toward uniformity of life, which today so immensely aids the capitalist interest in the standardization of production had its ideal foundation in the repudiation of all idolatry of the flesh."³³ This brings out the fact that there is a deeper concern than such issues as whether or not there shall be a use of ritual and symbolism in a worship service or whether or not it is sinful to enjoy the theatrical, musical and dramatic arts. The question is, has Protestantism, by deciding that one element in man - the rational - represents the whole man, contributed to the truncation of man? And further, has this mutilated man, by his one-sided participation in life, contributed to an ideology that threatens to destroy him utterly? The assumption of the present study is that this, to a very large extent, is the case. The thesis of this study is that Protestantism, by a renewal of its spirit, will hold the key that will open the door leading to the renewal of man.

One way in which this can be done is by the recognition of the fact that man is a whole, rather than a collection of parts which can be developed or allowed to atrophy individually. The natural, the intellectual and the spiritual elements in man are the creation of God, and are to be regarded as equally holy, as are the creations of every sort which are made possible by the possession and exercise of these functions. Similarly, it can be said that the attitudes of religion, when arising out of sincerity - attitudes such as love, joy, passion - are as valid as the attitudes of duty and obedience, and as graciously

³³Ibid., p. 169.

accepted by God as marks of devotion and faith. Calvin himself recognized this polarity in man perhaps better than his followers, as is seen in his famous question and answer: "What is the chief end of man? The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."³⁴ Enjoyment and glorification go together. The joy and the beauty of life, as well as the enthusiasm of worship are in need of recognition and re-instatement.

There has grown up in the modern world an estrangement between the community of faith and the community of the artist. Religion and duty on the one hand, and beauty and pleasure on the other hand, have been seen as belonging to different worlds, to the detriment of both and the demoralization of man. The artist, using the word in its widest sense, affirms this world. He finds in the relation of himself to the world, and in the relations of color, form, texture and sound that he beholds in the world, a certain goodness, happiness and excellence. The world of the church, however, has used the phrase "the grace of God" with such an exclusively rigorous soteriological meaning that it has left the excitement, the joy, and the wonder of the artist quite outside the scope of its gracious intention. But if the church could use the word to designate to him that the interior life of what he beholds with wonder and joy might also be that grace which came as an embodiment in Jesus the Christ, perhaps some narrow but passable bridge of discourse might be opened. As Sittler says,

³⁴Sittler, op.cit., p. 30.

There are certainly Christians who have no holy regard for the natural, and artists who have no regard for the holy; but a deep unfolding of both ways of life toward ultimate meanings of both grace and nature might open up ways of discourse and of intention whereby estrangement could be overcome.³⁵

The estrangement between religion and art is a tragic thing in a world in which all the agencies of reconciliation, of a spiritual, emotional or artistic nature should have a ground of unity in the overcoming of the materialistic agencies of alienation that are a part of the capitalist society. That religion and art are expressions of a unity of beauty and truth can hardly be disputed by those who are the inheritors of the Judeo-Christian tradition, and who are nourished by the biblical expressions of the grace of God and the beauty of creation.

Turning now to the subject of worship in the Protestant churches it would seem that a much broader definition of worship is called for than that which is suggested by the average Protestant worship service. Here it is that the paucity of the Protestant's appreciation of his own being in the apprehension and experience of the Holy is most clearly evident. He wilfully closes off many of the channels of communication between himself and God, and keeps open only one - the intellectual or cognitive. He forgets that God's manner of revelation of himself is not limited to those means which man has decided are proper, but is inclusive of all the means of communication and reception which God in his wisdom has willed into being.

Worship is not only the understanding of God's Word in a cognitive way. It has been variously described by perceptive prophets of the

³⁵Ibid., p. 8.

faith as feeling, experiencing the holy, participating in the ground of one's being, and other phrases which suggest a broadening and deepening of the experience of worship. But for the man in the pew, in the overwhelming majority of cases, who is the product of the Enlightenment and the Reformation, imbued with a strong sense of his autonomy, meaning principally his autonomy as a rational man, the cognitive element is the principal feature of his worship experience. This can be seen in the excessive importance attached to the sermon. The other elements in worship, such as music, prayer, symbolism and ritual are participated in, but not with enthusiasm or with appreciation of their real place.

The value of such worship experience is limited, as it nourishes only one element of man, leaving the others in an impoverished condition. It is necessary to recognize the essential unity of man, even though he may be existentially disunited, and then, through the worship experience, nourish the whole man in all his mysterious complexity. To put this in another way, in the words of a prominent religious writer, the world is now at the end of the Gutenberg era and, following the thinking of Eric Fromm, there is need of the development of the worship experience which uses all the senses.

This is a difficult concept for the Protestant to grasp. But once again the Protestant principle can be called upon to be a guide in evaluating the religious situation in the light of the perfect and the existent. It is not sufficient for religious reformers to promulgate new and more inclusive ways of worship - history has demonstrated the inefficacy of that approach - but the recognition of the totality

and unity of the self on the part of churchmen themselves will facilitate the perception of the interplay of nature and grace in the religious life.

A recovery of the sacramental spirit will both aid and be aided by the perception of the relation of nature and grace. This is seriously lacking in modern culture, as well as in religion. A recovery of the sacramental spirit does not mean simply an increased use of sacramental activities in the conduct of worship, but a deepened relation to the symbols and a heightened sense of participation in meaningful acts of worship, such as the Eucharist. It also means an increasing sense of reverence for life and for nature as the supporter of life and as the manifestation of the creativity and the love of God. It means also a warmer sense of communion with God as the Spirit who gives life through creation, and as the Lord of creation. The sacramental spirit affirms the unity of man both with the natural world and with the Ground of all being, as well as an affirmation of the reality of communion with God and of communion with the Holy Spirit through this unity. Protestantism has rightly protested the magical use of the Mass; it should re-affirm the truth of that which the Mass symbolizes. It can do this without doing violence to its true spirit of prophetic criticism; it cannot refrain from doing it without doing violence to its true spirit of creative witness. Sacramentalism, in its objective form, may lead to superstition and sacerdotalism; in its spiritual truth it can lead to meaning and identification.

Standing in a relation of polarity with sacramentalism is mysticism, a form of religious experience with which Protestants are

also unfamiliar. Mysticism, like sacramentalism, brings resources to bear on the religious life which add richness and depth, and which traditionally have been thrust to the periphery of Protestant thinking and experience. The reason for this is again the concept of the autonomous, rational man of the Enlightenment, who feels secure in his ability to meet and to deal with the situations of life on the basis of intellectual capacity, and who feels insecure and depreciated when in a condition of non-rational involvement with a spiritual power of unusual form and unknown strength.

If sacramentalism can be described as a way of worship using "all the senses", it may be suggested that mysticism can be described as a way of worship using "none of the senses", that is, by going beyond the senses, and seeking direct and immediate confrontation with God. Modern man in the western cultures, has traditionally and consistently held in suspicion any form of occultism as being incompatible with the dignity of his intellect, and has, in this context, asked the questions and found the answers. The practical and the pragmatic have been the concerns with which he has dealt. This has resulted in a materialism in science, politics and economics which has colored his whole outlook and shaped his life in the direction of the objective and the material.

But since Einstein all this has changed, not only in the physical sciences but also in the life sciences and the social sciences, with consequent repercussions in the mental orientation of man to these aspects of life. Religion which, by definition, belongs in the spiritual vanguard, now finds itself marking time and retaining a large

degree of objectivity while the secular sciences are becoming more "spiritual". It is suggested here that, on the basis of the pragmatic test, which western man respects, and which is demonstrating the validity of the non-objective approach to scientific questions, there be an openness to exposure to the non-objective experience of religion. This is not to suggest that religion become the handmaid of science, but that religion have the courage to recognize truth when it is apparent, and be willing to see this particular instance of truth as a witness to neglected emphases in its own experience.

The cultivation of the sacramental and the mystical elements of religion by Protestantism, in the true spirit of the Protestant principle of criticism, witness and openness to experience will surely add new dimensions of faith and courage to the church.

Another element which is lacking in Protestantism as a result of the rational and cognitive orientation is that of Holy passion. Except for the aberrations of religious emotion found in the fringe forms of Protestantism, the element of high religious emotion is not characteristic of the Protestant churches. What is found instead is the respect for and the expectation of orderliness, moderation and propriety in the context of rational society. Faith is most often interpreted as acceptance of doctrines which are rationally respectable and socially acceptable, rather than being known in the high spiritual sense of being "grasped by an ultimate concern". This Tillichian definition is descriptive of a religious state that is marked by a holy passion for participation in the Ground of one's being in a way that will transcend all preliminary concerns. Religious passion, in this sense, will be

compatible with Protestant dignity, for it does not subvert or negate the rational, but adds another dimension to the rational. It is one quality which has marked all Christian reformers from Paul to Luther. Religious passion, in correlation with the Protestant principle, will have the power of releasing Protestantism from the captivity of intellectualism, and of breathing new life and power into the people of the New Creation, and into their koinonia.

Another element of religious perception which, because of the predominance of the cognitive emphasis, has not come into its own in the Protestant church is the symbolic. This is because the rational form of perception is regarded as the norm, and all other forms are believed to be inferior. The result of a progressive enhancement of and dependence upon the cognitive faculties of man, and the increasingly scientific and technological nature of culture is that "contemporary man suffers from the deterioration and breakdown of the central symbols in modern Western culture."³⁶

Symbols and other non-cognitive sources of knowledge and vehicles of experience are, because of this intellectual orientation, not accorded a sufficient degree of validity and respectability to allow them to become accepted media for the communication of knowledge or feeling, except on very superficial levels. As Tillich says, however, "One should never say 'only a symbol', but one should say

³⁶Rollo May, (ed.), Symbolism in Religion, (New York: Braziller, 1960), p. 22.

'not less than a symbol'³⁷ . . . for nothing less than symbols and myths can express our ultimate concern."³⁸

The loss of the symbolic, in the true religious sense, can be said to have tragic consequences in the impoverishment of the soul, and the return of the symbolic in religion would be one of the greatest forces of renewal of which it is possible to conceive. This is because of the fact that man lives both at the conscious and the cognitive level, and at the subconscious and psychological level, so that to starve the one and feed the other leads to spiritual malnutrition. Man is a whole man, complex in his structure, receiving nourishment in various ways and from many sources, to the ultimate benefit and health of the total self. The symbolic can speak to man of his ultimate concern, and through the symbol man can participate in his ultimate concern.

Thus a symbol has both its transcendent level and its immanental level. At the transcendent level the symbol participates in God, so that man, through the symbol, also participates in God. At the immanent level it represents God incarnated in Christ and participating in creation. The various characteristics of symbols are described in Dynamics of Faith:

1. (Symbols) point beyond themselves to something else.
2. (The symbol) participates in that to which it points.
3. (The symbol) opens up levels of reality which otherwise are closed to us.

³⁷ Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 45.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 53.

4. (The symbol) also unlocks dimensions and elements of our soul which correspond to the dimensions and elements of reality.
5. Symbols cannot be produced intentionally . . . they grow out of the individual or collective unconscious.
6. Like living beings (symbols) grow and die.³⁹

The symbolic, considered in this way, can be seen to have great value in the religious life, and should be recovered for Protestantism in a meaningful way.

Allied with the foregoing concerns are the elements of myth and ritual. These, being largely non-cognitive in structure, have also been to a great extent ignored or not understood by Protestantism. They have been rejected as partaking of superstition and magic, as being associated with primitive religion, as being mysterious and therefore potentially dangerous, and as unworthy of rational beings. What element or degree of myth and ritual is retained in Protestantism is either what is considered to be the irreducible minimum, or what is the result of a superficial and misguided accomodation to a "trend" in worship.

The Protestant misinterpretation and misunderstanding of the fact of myth and ritual lies, as in the other problems considered above, first of all, in the belief in the completeness and adequacy of the cognitive apprehension of reality, and secondly, in the fear of the unknown, and of possible captivity and domination by an outside or heteronomic power. These are both honest protests, but are inappropriate when considered against the standard of the Protestant principle which holds everything, including myth and ritual, up to the standard

³⁹Ibid., pp. 41-43.

of the ultimate. Using this principle, and correlating the finite elements with the infinite, it is immediately seen that neither myth and ritual nor reason is capable either of comprehending all truth or of usurping the place of God. Neither are they likely to become the captors of man.

The language of myth and ritual, coupled with the use of symbols, is not the ultimate language of faith, but it is one expression of the ultimate concern of the believer. When participated in according to this standard it provides a legitimate and highly effective form of communication with and participation in the divine.

Faith cannot remain alive without expressions of faith and the personal participation in them. This insight has driven Protestantism to a new evaluation of cult and sacrament in our period. Without symbols in which the holy is experienced as present, the expression of the holy vanishes.⁴⁰

A deep and honest appraisal of the effectiveness of the Protestant religious practices in the light of the cognitive as well as the cultic expressions will show value in extending the spectrum of the worship media, so that man in his totality may be receptive to the visitation of the Holy Spirit. Every attribute of man, the sensual, the intellectual, the physical, and the spiritual, with all the degrees of polarity and harmonization that exist among them, plays a part in the realization of human personality through communication with the ground of being. Man may experience God in many ways, and in many variations and combinations of ways. But there is no one way that is exclusively right, nor is there any one way that is altogether

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 121.

ineffectual. Therefore it behooves man to explore new ways of exposing himself in the totality of his being to the God who is the ground of his being.

Similarly, the expression of his faith need not, and should not, be limited to one form. Man in worship both receives and responds. If he enlarges his reception to include the totality of his being he will require his total self to respond. The concept of Protestant worship can properly be enlarged to include many forms of expression that have not traditionally been considered appropriate. A more complete faith will require a more complete expression.

IX. FROM USE OF LIMITED RESOURCES TO USE OF MANY RESOURCES

Just as the church, in seeking renewal, must broaden its base of apprehension and expression of ultimacy within its own life, so it must move from the use of limited resources within itself to the appreciation and use of many resources as found in the arts and sciences. In the discussion to follow, the relation of the church both to "religious" and to "non-religious" art will be considered, in the assumption that there is religious value in all forms of art which seek to express some form or aspect of meaning.

As a preliminary statement, a constructive and forward looking program for the churches must be advocated, looking toward a rapprochement of religion and culture. This refers particularly to the side of culture represented broadly by the arts and by the sciences of personality and of society, all of which deal with some element of life which has reference to the self in isolation and in community.

Secondly, the church must assess and interpret the various forms of art in terms of Christian criteria. In this connection a caution must be added, concerning the fact that the Christian criteria, like the criteria of the artist himself, is related not to what is pretty and pleasant only, but to what is so. The familiar Protestant principle is again a reminder that the validity of finite things is judged in relation to the infinite, to eternal truth.

Thirdly, the church must encourage artists within her own house, for art, besides having its own validity and being its own end, has a preaching and teaching function when it speaks the word of truth, whether that truth be related to the existential condition of man or to the ultimate reality, or to both in correlation.

Fourthly, the church itself must bear witness to the common ground to which both religion and art refer, each in its own way. For instance, as brought out by John Dixon, the great categories of art are creation, man in the image of God, fall, and redemption, which are identical with those of religion.⁴¹

Finally, the church must take the initiative in undertaking the practical task of providing an intersection point for the now separated communities of religion and art. The church, by adopting an attitude of self-righteousness and exclusiveness, and by being impercipient in respect to the seriousness of art, has forced the secularization of art and the divorce of the two communities.

⁴¹John W. Dixon, Jr., Nature and Grace in Art, (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1964). p. 72.

Turning now to a discussion of what may be called religious art it may be said at the beginning that there has been a decline in religious art since the Reformation, co-incident with the decline of all non-cognitive approaches to and expressions of reality. Music, especially notable in the church music of J.S.Bach, has perhaps suffered less than the other art forms, which have been distressingly innocuous.

The church, is, by common consent, concerned with all aspects of life - with good and evil, with health and sickness, with exaltation and despair, with hate and love, with death and life. Its concern runs the gamut of all human emotions, thoughts, and feelings - in short it embraces the totality of life. The full scope of Christian life and work, therefore, inevitably should include attention to the arts in all their contemporary forms, for the arts, also embracing the totality of life, are valid companions-in-arms to the church in waging war against selflessness and meaninglessness.

It is generally admitted by connoisseurs that art deteriorated during the nineteenth century - a period roughly corresponding with the heyday of the cognitive element in religion. As religion became heavily weighted in favor of rationalism, art became literally representational in a corresponding manner. They both lost, to a great extent, their contact with and reference to the ultimate, being pre-occupied with the finite, the rational and the objective. As Tillich observes, "The rediscovery of the expressive element in art since about 1900 is a decisive event for the relation of religion and the visual arts. It has

made religious art again possible."⁴² Tillich's use and definition of the word "expressive" may be open to question, but it is not the purpose of this study to pursue this problem. The point of interest here is that art in twentieth century has broken away from the representative and academic quality, and in doing so has found release and renewal. It is now, as it was in former great artistic periods, able not only to reflect the apparent and superficial, but also to express meaning. A new element is that of prophetic criticism. As yet the art of the twentieth century reflects mostly the negative, being related to the cross and the crucifixion in Christianity, and is not yet assertive of the positive, as symbolized by the resurrection.

Religion too, has begun to move from the nineteenth century era of rationalism into an era of criticism and renewal, on a tentative and hesitant basis. Now, it is here maintained that the church should have, on the one hand, a vanguard of men and women qualified to interpret the significance of contemporary art for the believer, and, on the other hand, an intention of actively promoting an alliance between art and religion, two forces that are grasped by ultimate concern.

This also applies to other arts, for instance, music. The church has, in the last one hundred years, by its unimaginative and academic attitude, turned its back on the Catholic and early Protestant tradition of religious music, and has, by relegating all arts to a status of inferiority and unworthiness, produced very little artistic church music. In Robert Baker's words,

⁴²Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 74.

The Christian Church in America today has lost - one might almost say it has repelled - the great majority of musicians who represent the first rank talent in our country. It has done this by its insistence on maintaining an unchanging status quo in its music and by insisting that this particular music, the great bulk of which will not measure up to acceptable artistic standards, is the only right and proper church music.⁴³

Doctor Baker asks,

Must we . . . continue to ignore the vast treasures of great music from the ages which is our rightful heritage? Shall we continue to evade the responsibility of creating great music for the church in our own time, thus disinheriting succeeding generations from that which they have a right to expect? What 'good old hymns' would we have to sing today if our great-grandfathers had adopted a similar attitude in the middle 1800's?⁴⁴

Doctor Baker feels that the church has the responsibility of attending to the situation, and of taking the initiative in bringing the resources of the musicians to bear on the religious enterprise. He continues,

Can we convince the musician of tomorrow that the message of Jesus Christ and his Gospel challenges him to bring to the church his best efforts? . . . It is the church which must take the lead, for the musicians, by and large have come to regard church music as an area which is dull, stultified, and perhaps worst of all, completely irrelevant.⁴⁵

These remarks could be repeated in regard to other art forms, such as literature, drama, and architecture. Architecture is perhaps the boldest and most honestly contemporary in its correlation of the vertical and the horizontal dimensions in the light of the present situation. All of the arts can be recognized as having legitimate religious expression by a church which is honest enough in its relation to the ultimate to appreciate the ability of forms other than its own to

⁴³Robert S. Baker, "Music and the Church", Report of the Special Committee . . ., p. 23.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 22f.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 24.

express ultimate concern. The implications of the Protestant principle, if recognized and followed with honesty and consistency, insist both on the persistent criticism of one's own form of witness, and the recognition of the relative validity of other legitimate forms of witness. Both are judged in correlation with one another and with the Absolute.

Having discussed the existence and witness of art forms in partnership with the church, in other words, religious art, it must also be recognized that there is secular art which has no explicit connection with religion. Art forms of this type exist in their own right as a part of modern secular culture, quite outside the influence of and without participation in religious concerns. This art, if it is serious in its intention, also has validity as it expresses some aspects of an ultimate concern. Religion, in its own provincialism, often neglects secular art, assuming that if it is not "religious" art, it has no religious message or content. Here again, religion, by relegating art, music and literature to a position of spiritual inferiority, closes out an authentic and often vivid means of embracing and expressing reality. In the process of enriching and renewing itself religion, through the church, is required to open communication with the valid art forms of modern society. A committee of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. lists several tasks which the church can undertake as it engages in this work:

1. The first task of the church in the area of the arts is to know contemporary culture and its expressions and through them to know our time more fully.
2. The second task of the church in the area of the arts is to assess and interpret them in terms of Christian criteria.

3. A third task of the church in the area of the arts is to contribute directly to the health and vitality of the arts and the proper understanding of the vocation of the artist.

4. A fourth task of the church in the area of the arts is to heal the breach that has arisen between the religious institution and those chiefly identified with the arts in our society.

5. A further task of the church in the area of the arts is to bear witness to the common ground to which both religion and the arts refer.

6. Finally, we should not neglect the practical aspect of this great imperative.⁴⁶

In preparing to come to grips with this situation so as to begin establishing communication and rapport with art forms, the problem of existentialism must be faced by the church. The church has, during most of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, veered away from the negativities of life. In the theological area the concept of sin fell into disuse, and in the social area there was a reluctance to face the grim facts. One of the unfortunate features which accompanied the liberal theology was the emphasis on positive thinking, peace of mind, and the innate goodness of human nature, all of which caused a spiritual blindness in respect to human sin and degradation. Although there is now evident some degree of correction in this respect, there is still a prevailing attitude of reluctance to look deep into human nature and society to see what really is there, both of goodness and of evil.

But this is what much of modern art forms do, often going to the opposite extreme. This sometimes induces an artistic preoccupation with the sick and the evil, which the churchman finds repulsive.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 10-16.

As the Special Report puts it:

Just as it is true in general that the achievement of the best exacts a steady look at the worst, so it is not to be expected that the artist in our time would escape the fragmentation and erosion . . . Necessary residence with the broken and the deviant may, indeed, seduce into a strange and permanent pre-occupation with the malignancies of life.⁴⁷

This is exactly the complaint of the churchman and citizen who "knows what he likes", meaning that he likes representational prettiness. Such a person still has much to learn in regard to the concern of modern artists.

Modern art tends to focus on the broken, the deviant, the pathological and the malignant, to all of which, too, the church should attend more intently than she commonly has. (italics not in the original)⁴⁸

James Luther Adams makes an observation concerning the depth of perception of art that also bears repeating:

In great works of art Tillich senses something deeper than form or content . . . he is impressed by an intuition of reality that seems to have grasped the artist who created the work, and that grasps anyone who looks into its depths.⁴⁹

This is in reference to the Sistine chapel, whereas the former comment was in reference to modern art, but for the church the implication is the same - art expresses some aspect of reality. If, like Michelangelo, the artist's expression is consanguineous with that of the church it is easily drawn into the orbit of the church. On the other hand if the artist, like Roualt, expresses an aspect of truth which is disparate from that which the church commonly stresses, it

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 10.

⁴⁹Tillich, The Protestant Era, concluding chapter by James Luther Adams, p. 298.

presents an opportunity and a challenge to the church.

This opportunity and challenge is in harmony with the Protestant principle which asks that all expressions of faith, of whatever form, be seriously considered and rigorously criticized in relation to the ultimate. If, according to the Christian criteria, modern art (including music, literature, drama and all other art forms) be found to contain an aspect of truth, even though it stand in judgment of the witness of the church, it will require to be heeded.

The church can find justification for the portrayal of the ugly, the sick, the desperate and the evil, in the Gospels themselves, for they are utterly honest in respect to the existential situation of man. In the scriptural tradition, including both the Old and the New Testaments, the whole gamut of human emotion and experience is run, from existential despair to courageous faith, from destructive evil to creative goodness, from killing pride to noble humility, from vicious hate to the Christian spirit of love, from selfishness to concern, and from callousness to compassion.

The great art forms of the ages have also given expression to the complexity of man in literature, drama, poetry, music, architecture and the graphic arts. If religion, in its provincialism and in its modern cultural captivity, has failed to meet the whole needs of man by failing to recognize the validity, or perhaps even the existence of, the whole man, it nevertheless has at its hand a vast treasure of resources upon which it can draw in order to supplement its own witness.

The church has presented a one-sided picture of man; modern art may also present a one-sided picture of man. Perhaps they are each

recognizing only half a man and are only feeding him half a loaf. This gives the church the opportunity to be true to one of its central doctrines - the partiality and ambiguity of all finite forms, and the inadequacy of any of them to comprehend the whole of reality. Let the church recognize the art forms; let it begin a process of reunion with them; let it criticize them and in turn be criticized by them, that renewal and effectiveness may come to both. The church, by participating in cultural forms in this way, will add a new dimension to its life, will become more relevant to the modern situation, and will be able to carry forward its mission of reconciliation more fully.

The foregoing discussion has been carried on with relation to the realm of the aesthetic, seeking to show that enrichment may come to the church in part through participation in the realm of culture. The same benefit will accrue to religion by the adoption of a more responsive attitude to other realms of life.

The church long since abandoned its policy of resistance to the pursuit of knowledge by the sciences. The earlier resistance was occasioned by what the church felt to be an unwarranted invasion, by secular forces, of the territory traditionally held by the church. In contrast to this, the church appears today to consider the fields open to scientific investigation to be separate from and unrelated to the areas which are the subject of religious concern, with the result that there is a serious lack of concern for, and lack of communication with, these fields. A dichotomy has developed. A third way is surely possible, and not only possible but necessary - the way of mutual understanding and concern - by which a critical and sympathetic respect for

the work of each may be held and expressed by the other. The result in respect to the church, would be a renewal and a strengthening as the church made contact with a new and valid way of truth.

A tentative beginning is being made at contact with the resources offered by psychology, psychiatry and related sciences. This is an encouraging situation which, it is hoped, will greatly expand and deepen as the church finds new meaning for life in the researches of depth psychology, existentialist philosophy and other new approaches, and then finds ways to apply the findings in its mission of redemption. Again, let it be said, that the traditional ways of witness to the spirit of the New Creation do not exhaust the possibilities, nor are they necessarily without need of correction in the light of further insight. Past, present and future truth as known by man is always relative, so that there is an obligation continually to evaluate present expressions of truth in the light of the absolute truth. This is in harmony with the Protestant principle.

The public sciences of sociology, politics, economics and their related disciplines are also frequently but mistakenly overlooked by the church. The church is not simply an institution related to private individuals; it is an institution among other institutions, existing and working in society. It therefore has relation with society, whether or not it wishes it or acknowledges it. The productive course would be to participate in the research and the activity which make up the social scene, rather than to accept culture as a necessary evil. Religion has a close relation to culture. It is, as Tillich says, "the substance of culture", while culture is "the form of religion".

A realistic and creative participation in the formulation of cultural sciences, an active participation in the practice of culture, and the exercise of prophetic criticism regarding the expressions of both religion and culture would be an act of social responsibility on the part of the church. The church in this enterprise would find renewal in the act of becoming more relevant, while culture would find an increase of substance and meaning.

As a famous divine once said, "The world is my parish". This applies to the church, not only in the realm of people, but also of ideas. All can be brought into the ken of the church, while the church can move into them, bringing new life and new hope.

X. FROM CHARITY TO MISSION

The change from the use of the word "Missions" to the use of the word "Mission" in church parlance would appear to be inconsequential. But if it were occasioned by a basic revolution in the understanding of the meaning of Christianity it would be of great consequence, for it would be a fulfillment of the process of the New Being.

Charity and paternalism have marked much of the mission effort of the church in the modern era. Paternalism, symbolized by the phrase, "the white man's burden" has been one of the dominating characteristics of the overseas missions enterprises. Too much credit cannot be given to the missionary work of the churches in modern times, as large numbers of people in all parts of the world have been benefitted in countless ways by the devotion and the work of missionaries of the Christian churches. One striking result is the present surge to selfhood and

nationhood of the underprivileged peoples of Africa and Asia. In a most important way the ground for this was prepared by the educational and evangelistic missions of the last one hundred and fifty years, as people in darkness were shown light, were encouraged to believe in themselves, and were urged to develop their potential.

But, despite the great value of the overseas missions, the problem of paternalism, insofar as it exists, represents a mark of derogation of the missionary project. Paternalism, as a mark of pride in one's position and of disrespect for the other person in his situation, constitutes a moral and ethical problem in regard to the ultimate effects of missions, inasmuch as the residual effects on both the recipients of the benefits and the givers of the help are such as to mitigate against true communication and real understanding.

The same situation applies with equal validity and with similarly unhappy results in respect to the projects of "home" missions. The unfortunate acceptance of the comment of Jesus that "the poor will always be with you" as a justification for perpetual inequality often blinds the church to the true meaning of agape as shown in the totality of the life and work of Jesus, and provides a vindication for the continuance of superficial and non-redeeming charity.

It must also be admitted that, in the sense of "missions", both overseas and home, there remains a residual belief, even in the hearts of many Protestants, in the doctrine of salvation by works, by which the dispenser of benefits to the less favored may in turn receive a dispensation of grace from the ultimate giver of gifts. Another way of stating this is to say that there is an ambiguity of motives and an

uncertainty of purpose in the whole concept of missions. The opportunity to engage in mission work is sometimes regarded as a fortunate thing, in that the presence of the unwashed or the unsaved provides the means by which the church and its people can "show forth" their good works so that the Lord may "see and reward them". Of course this is an overstatement, but the fact that this motivation does have some place in the thinking of church people is a cause for concern.

A more complete displacement of the ego principle and a more complete dominance of the agape principle would change the ground upon which the concept of mission is founded, and would hence bring about a radical difference in attitude and method on the part of the churches and their members, and a corresponding increase in openness and receptivity on the part of the subjects of the missionary concern.

The beginnings of a movement to interpret the church as Mission itself rather than as "having missions" are noticeable, largely stemming from denominational leaders, but as yet not acceptable or even understood by many of the laity. It is not likely that church people will allow their traditional conceptions and patterns of missionary activity to be overturned and replaced by new ones given to them by the church hierarchy, nor is it likely that the laity will find it possible critically to re-evaluate this aspect of their work from within their present theological and ethical position.

Once again, as in other aspects of religious life discussed in earlier chapters, it will be necessary for the church and the churchmen to remember the Protestant principle and to be guided by what it dictates in respect to this particular question. The vertical dimension

must be accepted and allowed to intersect with the horizontal or existential dimension in correlation with the human attitudes and practices which relate to the situation.

Questions that will be asked will be: What is the New Creation and what does it mean to me as an individual and in relation to other people of the world? What does the New Creation mean to others as individuals and in relation to me and to one another? What does it mean to be "grasped by an ultimate concern" (Tillich), or "born again" (Jesus), or to be a "new creation" (Paul), and what are the individual and cultural prerequisites which make these phenomena possible? What is the meaning of agape and the saving and losing of life in relation to me and my concern with mission? What is the correlation of the achievement of personality as an individual in isolation with the achievement of personality in community, and what is the relation of these to the missionary concern?

The Protestant principle demands that all these and other questions be asked, critically and radically, of the finite particularizations of the mission concern, and correlated with the infinite and eternal truth. The Protestant principle holds all finite and temporal manifestations of the infinite and eternal Absolute to be ambiguous and fragmentary; this is its critical function. But it also holds them all to be susceptible to correction and revivification by the spirit of God's New Creation; this is its creative function.

It is only as the total church, laity, leadership and clergy, commit themselves to a deep and honest religious search that a new and vital concept of mission for the new day will emerge. Admittedly this

is not an easy thing, but neither is it an impossible task. It is a necessary one for the renewal of the church; it is obligatory for the effective promulgation of the Good News in today's world.

XI. FROM VERTICAL-HORIZONTAL TO FULL DIMENSIONAL

The present section will constitute a brief development of the theme presented in the corresponding section in Chapter VII, on a more practical level.

It may be stated as a generality that the two divisions of Protestantism are the conservative and the liberal, with the conservatives stressing the vertical dimension in religion, and the liberals tending to stress the horizontal, (with of course a recognition of the existence of extremes at either end, and shadings and overlappings in between).

The transcendence of God is a prime concept in the first of these two groups of Christians. In this form of belief God chooses to reveal himself when, where, and how he will, and his revelations are clear and unmistakeable, as, for instance, in the biblical revelation. God acts in the creation and in the sustaining of the world, and his acts are not to be gainsaid. Man lives in sin and under the judgment of God, but God may choose to forgive man. Destiny may, in a sense, be said to be replaced by fate, as the outcome of life is largely taken out of man's hands. There is no salvation of man in society; salvation is beyond time; time and eternity are of essentially different quality, so that man lives in time and hopes for eternity. Man's work is essentially ineffectual in any ultimate sense, being related to a finite world and

a finite society which is not redeemable.

On the other hand the immanence of God is a prime concept in the second of these two Christian groups. The horizontal dimension is stressed, in opposition to the vertical which is stressed in the first group. The liberal believes in the power of human reason to attack and solve the problems of existence. He believes in the essential goodness of both man and creation; his life in this world is considered of great importance. He believes in the doctrine of progress, the immanence of God, and salvation within time.

These summarizations are admittedly inadequate and incomplete, and perhaps unfair in some respects, but, with these qualifications they are presented as a way of visualizing two variant conceptions of the Christian faith - the one stressing relationship to the vertical dimension, the other tending to emphasize relationship to the horizontal dimension.

Theoretically this is true, but practically it would appear that the principle dimension of human concern in both groups is the horizontal. The relegation of God to another world, as in the first group, coupled with his characteristics of control over the ultimate and other-worldly affairs of man's being, conspire to leave man pre-occupied with the things of the world, over which he does have some jurisdiction. The materialism, objectivity and legalism often associated with such forms of the faith also tend to lead to preoccupation with the this-worldly aspect of religion. There is an undue concern, even in Protestantism, the religion of the spirit, with the objective and the physical - in other words, with the horizontal dimension of religious

life.

What is needed is a return to the multi-dimensional faith of the Middle Ages or of the Biblical time, without the errors, inadequacies, or excesses of those eras. This would apply to all aspects of religion—personal faith, corporate worship, and the private and public witness.

A study of the Bible with this problem in mind would demonstrate the realistic but positive existentialism of the biblical revelation in contrast to the dualistic thread that runs through much of modern Christianity. In the Bible the essential is always responding, in its existentialism, to the essential. There is correlation always between the essential and the existential.

In the Bible the full reality of man is evident; neither his fleshliness nor his spirituality are slighted, and their unity is proclaimed. There is correlation between the flesh and the spirit; man is a whole man in his existential situation. His response to God is made from that situation.

In the Bible the sin of man and the grace of God are also in correlation. Biblical man knows that his essential nature and his existential actuality are in conflict, producing estrangement and alienation, but he also knows that the grace of God takes cognizance, not of this fact alone, but even more of the fact of his being a person, in need of reconciliation. Thus, biblical man is not subject to existential despair, in the final analysis; he is saved from this because he has the courage of faith as he is grasped by an ultimate concern.

These are but some of the aspects of a full-dimensional faith which, if known and experienced by the church and its people, will bring renewal to its life and renewed effectiveness to its mission.

XII. FROM INDIVIDUALISM TO KOINONIA

Religion has been described as what one does with his solitariness. This is true, in a very fundamental way, for the communion of a man with his God is a most personal and holy thing, something which cannot possibly be participated in by any other individual. Man, in this sense, is radically alone and separated from his neighbors.

And yet it must be recognized that religious knowledge and religious experience does not come to one without the mediating and formulating activity of the church. The religious experience of one utterly divorced from the religious community for his whole life would be a very meager thing indeed, compared to what is possible to him in the context of a religious community and society. It is this religious community, existing in society through the ages, which has provided the soil on which countless revelations of God and innumerable responses of man have grown together, to form the religious tradition from which is drawn the spiritual sustenance of modern man.

Modern man may choose to absent himself from the religious community and follow his own way of religion, but he cannot, in honesty, evade the fact that he is living off the capital of the church, accumulated through many years of history.

Modern man may, as many do, be a part of the religious community and still hold an individualistic concept of religion, with an

inadequate understanding of the church as community or fellowship. He may take part in the life of the church personally, and support the church financially, and yet still visualize it as an institution designed to serve him and his fellow members as individuals. The Renaissance concept of individuality and the Protestant concept of person are wrongly interpreted to produce an element of self-centeredness that is antithetical to the basic meaning of agape, which is the true foundation of the Christian church, as expressed in the life of Jesus the Christ.

The purpose of the church is to bring man into the experience of the New Creation, to provide the milieu and the nourishment of the spirit to the point where he will find it possible as a person to experience faith, or as Tillich says, to be "grasped by an ultimate concern". This is part of the process of self-affirmation which is every man's concern and which is believed to be his destiny, as willed by God. This is

the affirmation of the self as a self; that is, of a separated, self-centered, individualized, incomparable, free, self-determining self.⁵⁰

But man's self-affirmation has another side which is distinguishable but not separable. Tillich also develops at some length this other side, which he describes as "the courage to be as a part".⁵¹ This involves the recognition of the relationship of self with self,

⁵⁰Paul Tillich, The Courage to Be, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), p. 87.

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 87-96.

the recognition of the needs of the self and of others, the possibility of these needs being met, the risk of exposing oneself to other selves, and the involvement in the existential situation.

For the church to be the creative power that it is surely willed to be, individualism must give way to fellowship, or more correctly, to koinonia, the blessed, healing, redeeming fellowship which has as its ground, agape. To be grasped by the New Creation means to be so filled with this love that one becomes himself a new creation, living within the fellowship of the New Creation.

Modern man, in search of a principle on which to build his personality and his society in such a way that it will have the courageous faith that will enable it to transcend the risks of existence, overcoming estrangement, meaninglessness and despair, needs but to let himself be grasped by the ultimate concern which expresses itself in love. Love will provide the ground from which the existential problems can be viewed, and by which they can be overcome.

Individualism separates, and produces fragmentation and disintegration; koinonia through agape unites, and produces wholeness and integrity.

Love alone can transform itself according to the concrete demands of every individual and social situation without losing its eternity and dignity and unconditional validity. Love can adapt itself to every phase of a changing world.⁵²

The koinonia is more than the sum of its parts; it is the fellowship of the faithful in which and through which the individual

⁵²Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 155.

discovers the New Creation. The koinonia is more than a group of individuals; it is the fellowship of the redeemed, in which each self loses its selfhood in love for the other, and finds its selfhood in the other's love. The koinonia is more than a gathering of worshippers; it is the holy community, discovering that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst."

CHAPTER IX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has sought to provide a theological and ethical justification for a radical re-appraisal of the stance of the church in modern culture on the basis of the timeless and essential Gospel in relation to the temporal and existential situation. This has been done, using Paul Tillich's conception of the "Protestant principle", and the "method of correlation", as applied to the churches in their cultural situation.

I. SUMMARY

A survey of the "boundary position" of Paul Tillich opened the discussion, to provide an orientation into this aspect of Tillich's life and thought.

A discussion of the "spirit of capitalism" followed, to provide a frame of reference in which to place the subsequent discussion relating to the later developments of the capitalist era. This was followed by two chapters, one listing the positive and one setting forth the negative results of the existence of the capitalist form of society.

A study of the "Protestant principle" came next, supporting the thesis that the Protestant principle offered a way of solution to the ontological and the existential problems of modern man.

The church was then shown to be in a position in history where it could, with advantage to itself and hence to culture, accept the concept of boundary as expressive of its place in modern life. This

calls for a re-evaluation of its theological and ethical orientation, with the consequent adoption of a new role of mediation in society.

The final chapter consisted of a discussion of several aspects of the church's life and thought, with proposals for renewal. Each of the sections in the chapter began with a discussion of the problems and the shortcomings of the church, with an attempt to find reasons for the default of the church, and closed with proposals for renewal. In each of these cases, recognizing the problem of the laity in breaking away from established concepts and practices, theological justification for the proposed forms of renewal was offered.

II. CONCLUSIONS

It is with some degree of trepidation that a study such as this, dealing with such fundamental and far-reaching issues, is offered.

To begin with, there is hesitation in presuming to present an analysis and development of the thought of a man of the stature of Paul Tillich, the profundity and complexity of whose work is well known to all who attempt to read him. Tillich's work in the fields of philosophy, theology and ethics will undoubtedly be the subject of discussion and critical evaluation by men of high standing in academic circles for many years to come.

For another thing, it is also recognized that there are many church leaders of vast experience and national reputation who are giving much time and thought to various aspects of the problem which has been discussed in these pages. These are beginning to give rise to some degree of discussion and experimentation in the churches in the

light of the new stimulation and the modern situation. Considering these developments there is a feeling of hesitance in presenting untried ideas and proposals for consideration.

In spite of this the present study is offered, in the belief that any serious contribution to knowledge and to the problem of the renewal of the church, however partial and fragmentary it may be, will have some insights and open up some fields for further exploration that will be helpful.

One aim of the study has been to translate one aspect of Tillich's thinking - the direct relation of theology and ethics - into language and thought forms that are more easily comprehensible to many than the original Tillichian formulations may be, and to present them in a relatively brief compass.

Another aim has been to present Tillich's concept of the Protestant principle as being of fundamental importance to understanding the central point in Christianity - the ultimacy of the revelation of God as love, in Christ, and the necessity of seeing every finite and concrete expression of that revelation as necessarily partial and ambiguous, and therefore subject to unremitting prophetic criticism and re-evaluation.

The third and most important aim of the study has been to present this material as a foundation and justification for a break through from a religion of legalism to a religion of the spirit. The problem is still existent, nineteen hundred years after Paul and Jesus. The need for this is seen in what Erich Fromm calls an "escape from freedom" - a desire to be safe in bondage rather than courageous in

freedom.

It has been an assumption of the study that churchmen, laity and clergy together, recognize, dimly or clearly as the case may be, that in some way the church is losing ground in modern society. They feel that there must be changes, both in philosophy and in program if the church is to be able to be the reconciling and redeeming power that it is meant to be. The difficulty in coming to grips with the situation lies in the very fact of the existence of the church itself, its beliefs, its customs and its practices. They have become Christianity in the eyes of churchmen (and in the eyes of the secular world as well) so that there is a fear of changing that which is holy and unchangeable.

It is believed that the present study, by correlating the visible, temporal, and fallible church with the invisible, eternal, and perfect New Creation, of which it seeks to be the witness, will suggest a way of release from the captivity of the imperfect, and a willingness to be grasped by the ultimate concern, which is God's love.

The church must continually find renewal, in reference to the ground of its existence, as it has done, in the great periods of its history.

This is both more necessary now in the complexity and confusion of modern society than it has been in earlier and more settled ages, and more possible in this era of exciting breakthroughs in all other realms of human life and thought.

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